

# THE COSTCO CONNECTION

October 2013 • Volume 28 • Number 10

A lifestyle magazine for Costco members

# The thinker

Inside the mind of  
Malcolm Gladwell **26**



**Inside:**  
111 digital  
enhancements!  
(See page 5 for more info.)



What's your business worth? **23** • Home security **48** • NBA tickets **81**

# THE COSTCO CONNECTION

## Welcome to *The Costco Connection* Online Edition and Newsstand Edition

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State-by-state look at what types of alcoholic beverages are sold at different Costco locations
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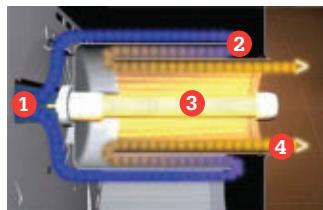
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## DEPARTMENTS

### 7 Front End

BY GINNIE ROEGLIN AND DAVID W. FULLER

### 9 Dialogue

Letters from our readers

### 12 Fresh Views

Brain food for the entrepreneur

### 15 Consumer Connection

BY DAVID AND AMANDA HOROWITZ

### 17 Tech Connection

BY MARC SALTZMAN

### 20 Informed Debate

Should we separate commercial banks from investment banks?

### 54 For your health

Hearing problems + Down Syndrome Awareness Month

### 59 Arts & Entertainment

Book buyers' picks + DVD pick

### 100 Member Connection

Every member has a unique story.

## SPECIAL SECTION

# For your home

Kitchen knives 41

Quality assurance 45

Luminarc 47

Security systems 48

Plus, Buyer's Picks

PHOTO COURTESY OF ARC INTERNATIONAL

## COVER STORY

# Gladwell tidings

Malcolm Gladwell's observations have worked their way into the national lexicon. How his perspective shapes our own.

BY BRYAN REESMAN

PAGE 26

RANN CHANDRIC/EYEVINE/REDUX  
COVER IMAGE: BILL WADMAN

## FEATURES

### 23 A sense of dollars

How to realistically evaluate the value of your business.

BY SUSAN SCHRETER

### 34 Creative Cooking: FoodSaver

More than just a fancy way to wrap food, the FoodSaver can actually help you with recipes.

BY SCOTT JONES

### 37 For Your Table:

#### Brussels sprouts

It's time to give these little green balls of goodness their due.

BY HANA MEDINA

### 51 Tooth or consequences

By taking care of your teeth, you are taking care of your health.

BY ANGELA PIRISI

### 59 Tales of the father

Anne Hillerman continues her father's legacy, with more stories of Leaphorn and Chee.

BY J. RENTILLY

### 61 Book Pick: Mrs. Poe

Quoth the author, "Poe is not the crazy guy we think he is."

BY MIA GEIGER

### 63 Success with Failure

Cartoonist Stephan Pastis makes no mistakes with his first book for youngsters.

BY STEPHANIE E. PONDER

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5

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## DIGITAL CONTENT

Readers will find dozens of digital enhancements throughout this magazine, including:

**Anne Hillerman, page 59**  
**China Beach, page 69**  
**Feral cats, page 72**  
**Cook Islands, page 79**  
**Brandi Chastain, page 93**  
**Member Connection, page 100**

## INSIDE COSTCO

### 81 Ticket to savings

Costco's online and in-warehouse ticket program provides savings on NBA games, theme parks, restaurants, spas and much more.

BY TIM TALEVICH

### 83 Member Services

Children's ID security service, and Elavon payment processing.

BY HANA MEDINA

### 88 Buying Smart: Costco's chocolate program

Quality, sustainability and traceability mean a fair return to everyone.

BY SHERRIE NEWMAN

### 93 Reviving memories

Costco's 1-Hour Photo Center helped famed soccer player Brandi Chastain transfer nearly lost family film footage to DVD.

BY DAVID WIGHT

**94 What's New**

**98 Special Events**

**99 Services Update**

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## FEATURES

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

### 65 On the verge of greatness

Only 24 years old, Veronica Roth is already finding acclaim with her *Divergent* series.

BY FRAN R. SCHUMER

### 69 Life's a beach

*China Beach*, a classic TV series on military hospital life in Vietnam, gets a fresh look.

BY NANCY MILLS

Know your knives 41

### 71 Feral cat fixes

Advocates for treating the feral cat problem without euthanasia speak out.

BY PENNY MUSCO

### 76 Boston and Seattle proud

Costco employees rally around Jeff Bauman and find their efforts repaid tenfold.

BY WILL FIFIELD

### 79 Costco Travel: Cook Islands

There's no such thing as too many Cooks in this island paradise.

BY T. FOSTER JONES

### 85 NEW: Focus on Kirkland Signature™

New Kirkland Signature hearing aids and the latest in Kirkland Signature luggage.

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## from the publisher's desk

Ginnie Roeglin



Ginnie Roeglin is Senior Vice President, E-Commerce and Publishing, and Publisher of *The Costco Connection*.

THE ENTIRE COUNTRY watched with horror the bloody images of injured runners and spectators at the Boston Marathon following the senseless bombing. One image played over and over in the news: a man wearing a cowboy hat pushing a severely injured young man away from the scene in a wheelchair to get medical attention. The injured young man is Nashua, New Hampshire, Costco employee Jeff Bauman, who lost both of his legs in the attack. Costco employees immediately rallied behind Jeff and his family. Costco sent two other employees who lost legs in other accidents, *Costco Connection* reporter Will Fifield and Issaquah warehouse employee Byron Speer, across the country to meet with Jeff and share their experiences and advice on living a full life after limb loss. Jeff is an amazingly courageous, determined and positive young man who is moving forward every day. Will shares the inspirational story of their meeting with him on page 76.

This issue features several excellent gift ideas for the holidays. The FoodSaver is a great appliance to help you preserve fresh fruits and vegetables and store make-ahead meals in the freezer (page 34). You can learn about what to look for when selecting knives on page 41. For the people on your list who already have it all, Costco offers many gift cards and tickets to events that anyone would appreciate. You can read more about them on page 81.

On page 88, you'll find a great story about Costco's chocolate program. To create and sustain a consistent level of quality for Costco's Kirkland Signature™ chocolate products, Costco and the Blommer Chocolate Company have developed a comprehensive sustainability program. More than 5,000 farmers in the West African nation of Ivory Coast participate in Costco's program, which provides training to improve crop quality and yields and benefit the environment. Farmers are paid fair prices, and Costco has helped to fund many community projects, including schools and medical facilities.

Happy October from all of us at Costco. ☺



## from the editor's desk

David W. Fuller

THIS IS VERY tough, so I will get right down to it.

After 24 years at the helm of *The Costco Connection*, 17 of them penning this column, I have announced my retirement, effective at the end of November.

It is no easy decision to leave a company that is as successful, generous, ethical and fun as Costco, but I am doing this so that I can have greater control over my own time and the opportunity to explore the wide and wonderful world more on my own terms. I feel that now is the time to do that in good health with my wife, my two daughters and their husbands, my 6-month-old grandson, and any siblings and cousins of his who might be coming along.

To those of you who have been ardent and/or long-term readers of this publication, I want to extend my deepest appreciation. I especially thank the many readers who have written over the years to say how much they enjoy the magazine. Not everyone "gets" what *The Costco Connection* is really about, even though I have attempted at times in this column to make it clear. Neither a magazine nor a catalog in the conventional sense, it is not even what some might call a "magalog." This publication's uniqueness is what makes it hard for some to understand and what makes it surprisingly resonant for others.

In my more trenchant moments I like to think that what Costco does for the world of business (demonstrate that there is a way to treat every stakeholder category fairly and still succeed financially) is what *The Connection* does for the world of journalism (demonstrate that there is a way to promote a company and its products while maintaining editorial integrity).

In both cases, that is what some have come to call The Costco Way. I will have more to say about that in my final column next month.

(If you care to follow my transition from editor's desk to editor's deck, you will be able to do so through a blog I am beginning at [Fromtheeditorsdesk.com](http://Fromtheeditorsdesk.com).) ☺

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13EX1227 8/13



## Debate goes on In response to the September Debate, "Is America giving up too much privacy for security?"

**YES.** No amount of security can justify the gross violations of privacy we are witnessing at the hands of the government.

Mark Kolodny  
Houston, Texas

**NO.** I believe controls are in place to ensure the right people are targeted. Personally, I have nothing to hide. Facebook has all my info already.

Hendrik Opsteiten  
Arlington, Virginia

## Member comments

### Affordable Care Act

The article ["Can you afford the Affordable Care Act?"] in Fresh Views, September 2013, may have seriously oversimplified a matter of great concern to your customers.

The written comment "If you own a business with more than 50 workers that already offers full-time workers affordable, quality coverage, you are fine" is both misleading and incomplete.

A more accurate statement would be "If you own a business with more than 50 workers that already offers full-time workers

affordable, quality coverage, you may be fine. But consult with your agent or a specialist to ensure your compliance."

Cindy Kazee  
Sacramento, California

### Don't put three on ATV

On page 99, in an article for the Costco Auto Program, you show three people on an ATV on the beach without helmets. It's illegal to ride three [to an ATV] in any state or national park, not to mention the lack of helmets.

The power-sports industry is beleaguered with regulations and restrictions as it is, and photos like this just add fuel to the fire, because they let people think it's OK to do that. In any photo depicting power-sports use, please depict them being used responsibly (and legally).

Leslie Sowden  
California Motorsports Group  
Hayward, California

*Thank you for bringing this to our attention. We also want to let members know that the "call to action" on page 99 for "power users" of Costco services should have listed mailbox-costcoservices@costco.com as the contact email address.—Editor*

### Crystal-ized

Thank you for letting me know that Billy Crystal has a new book ["Clearly Crystal," September 2013]. His *700 Sundays* is my No.1 all-time favorite, and I never thought there would be another like it. I have every expectation that *Still Foolin' Em* will be even better. I'm off as soon as you open in the morning, and I know what my favorite stocking stuffer's going to be this year.

Lois Sheddowski  
Pacific Grove, California

### Academy award

On behalf of Khan Academy, I would like to thank you for placing Sal Khan and Khan Academy on the cover of *The Costco Connection*.

# BLOGS and TWEETS

## Connection comments from the Internet

"#craftbeer represents 30% of Costco's beer sales ["The taming of the brew," September 2013]. From garages to brew pubs, craft brewing careers article."

Tweeted by Marc J. Beaulieu @MotorcycleMarc

"I'm reading about the Costco/Fila shoe in the #CostcoConnection mag ["A step up," September 2013] thinking, I bet they're comfortable ... and quality. #TurningIntoMyDad."

Tweeted by Philippe @PhilippeStJohn

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ion ["Digital school," August 2013].

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Ann Doerr  
Board Chair of Khan Academy

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Editorial



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## Open forum



CHRIS A RUSNAK

IN BIG COMPANIES and small ones, Inter-net forums are being used to engage and serve customers.

Costco member Patrick Clinger, founder and CEO of ProBoards ([www.proboards.com](http://www.proboards.com)), a site that enables people to create free online forums, says one of the biggest advantages of providing customers with access to a dedicated forum is the collaborative engagement that follows.

Forum members can learn more about your business through their interactions and can become some of your most staunch and vocal advocates. Also, these frequent visitors can be extremely helpful with assisting and influencing other customers, as they have already acquired a great deal of knowledge about your products and/or services.

"When a new member comes to a company's forum looking for advice or needing an answer to a question, [often] other forum members will be ready and willing to answer," Clinger explains. "In this way, the forum enables [businesses] to provide customer support 24/7, even when their offices are closed. This means a better customer service experience for visitors, without the need for committing further company resources."

Clinger offers these tips for effective forum use:

- Organize your forum into different categories so that similar discussions are grouped together.
- Personally welcome new members to your forum. This will help build a sense of community.
- Post messages asking for customer input. They can provide valuable business intelligence to help your decision making.
- Promptly reply to customers and address their needs. Respond openly and transparently to build customer loyalty.
- Post a new message each day to help build activity.
- Promote your forum using existing channels, including social media and your website. ☐



Rhonda Abrams' newest book is *Entrepreneurship: A Real-World Approach*. Register for her free business-tips newsletter at [www.planningshop.com](http://www.planningshop.com).

## Balancing act

**WORK/LIFE BALANCE.** Everyone wants it, but is it achievable if you run your own business?

This balance has been a hot topic recently, with Facebook COO Sheryl Sandberg telling women to "lean in" to their careers, and new mom and Yahoo! CEO Marissa Mayer banning employees working from home. But that conversation is centered around people who work as employees. Almost no one addresses how truly challenging work/life balance is to achieve when you own the company.

You might ask, don't those who run their own business have total control over their time? Can't a parent take the kids to the dentist at 11 a.m. without a boss looking over his or her shoulder or wondering how this will affect promotions?

Sure. Unless there's a client deadline, it's the only time to reach an important prospect or there isn't anyone else to watch the store. When you own your own business, you work whenever you need to work. It's a matter of dollars and cents.

Here are some ways to make managing the tug-of-war between home and business ownership easier.

**Rotate priorities.** During fall, your work demands may be heavy and someone else may have to get dinner on the table. In summer, you may have more time to make family the priority.

**Acknowledge that going to work is also serving your family.** Yes, you may miss the soccer game, but you're serving your family by earning money to put a roof over their heads.

**Structure your day and week.** A set work routine helps you and those around you understand your work life. Have regular business hours, even if you work out of your home.

**Don't neglect yourself.** Has it been years since you exercised? Do you always eat junk food at your desk? Having balance in your life does not mean all priorities have equal weight: You might spend only one hour a week on yourself, but even that one hour may help you through.

For a small-business owner, finding a balance between personal life and work life is not like reaching balance on a scale with equal weights, but more like balance on a teeter-totter. Sometimes one priority will be up, and the other down. You never reach true equilibrium, but, hopefully, you never fall off. And you have some fun. ☐

## More in archives

On Costco.com, enter "Connection." At *Online Edition*, search "Rhonda Abrams."

CHRIS A RUSNAK



## Making customers for life

"IF YOU SELL something, you make a customer today. But if you help someone, you can create a customer for life." That's the principle behind

Yutility: creating and giving away information and assistance that's so useful, people would pay for it. It comes from Costco member Jay Baer, a marketing keynote speaker and president-founder of Convince & Convert, a social media and content marketing consultancy. Baer says, "It's marketing that people actually want!"

In his book, *Yutility: Why Smart Marketing Is About Help Not Hype* (Portfolio/Penguin, 2013; [www.yutilitybook.com](http://www.yutilitybook.com); not available at Costco), Baer asserts that smart marketing comes in three distinct types.

**Self-serve information.** Fifty-seven percent of Americans possess a smartphone, and customers research purchases like never before. Businesses provide more information online so potential customers can determine what to buy from the palms of their hands. For instance, Holiday World and

Splashin' Safari, an amusement park in Indiana, provides five videos and a detailed questions-and-answers section for every major attraction, even showing the daily water temperature for the slides.

**Radical transparency.** Smart marketing is about building trust, and nothing builds trust like truth. Businesses that proactively acknowledge that sometimes they aren't the best choice create a well of goodwill that will pay off down the road. McDonald's in Canada allows Canadians to ask any question about McDonald's food on a special website, including videos that explain how to make Big Mac sauce at home and why burgers on TV commercials look different than the burgers in the restaurants.

**Real-time relevancy.** Being extremely useful in one situation is far better for your business than being somewhat useful in all situations. This is real-time relevancy, being the best possible source of information or assistance at a particular moment in time.

As an example, Costco provides real-time relevance with the complimentary Costco Concierge Services technical-support program that will troubleshoot or repair any electronic device purchased at Costco. ☐

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# HIM and your health



**David Horowitz** is a leading consumer advocate. David's daughter Amanda Horowitz is the CEO of Fight Back! and co-founder of FightBack.com. Email David and Amanda at [info@fightback.com](mailto:info@fightback.com).

LIKE IT OR NOT, under the Affordable Care Act (ACA) there will be a new way to get health insurance coverage in America—the Health Insurance Marketplace (HIM; [www.healthcare.gov](http://www.healthcare.gov)). Here is a general overview of what you should know.

## How the ACA works

Whether you need health coverage or have it already, when key parts of the ACA take effect in 2014, there will be new procedures. Some of these apply to plans in the HIM or other individual insurance, some apply to job-based plans and some apply to all health coverage. The HIM, created by the healthcare law, changes the search for health coverage by allowing you to compare plans and explore programs that you may qualify for with one application.

The new law also requires insurance companies to cover people with preexisting health conditions, holds insurance companies accountable for rate increases, makes it illegal for health insurance companies to arbitrarily cancel your health insurance just because you get sick, ends lifetime and yearly dollar limits on coverage of essential health benefits, provides free preventive care and guarantees your right to appeal a health plan's decision to deny your claim or end your coverage.

You can read the ACA at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' site, [www.hhs.gov](http://www.hhs.gov).

## Understanding HIM

The HIM allows you to fill out a single application, compare and explore options for health insurance coverage in your area, find out if you can get lower costs for premiums for private insurance plans and learn if you qualify for lower out-of-pocket costs. With an application, you learn if you and your family qualify for Medicaid or the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP).

## Applying for Marketplace coverage

You can apply for Marketplace coverage online, by mail or in person. Telephone help will be available at 1-800-318-2596 (TTY: 1-855-889-4325) 24

hours a day, seven days a week. Online chat help will be available at [www.healthcare.gov](http://www.healthcare.gov).

Navigators, in-person assisters, certified application counselors, and agents and brokers will all be able to help you complete your application, analyze the coverage available in your state and select the coverage that is right for you. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services will provide training to assisters so they are knowledgeable about the Marketplace and the coverage available through it.

## Enrollment periods

You can enroll in the exchange only during enrollment periods. For 2014, the six-month enrollment period starts October 1, 2013, and ends in March 2014. In year two and beyond, open enrollment will begin on October 15 and end on December 7. All 50 states will be able to access the Marketplace during the enrollment periods.

## Health benefits

All private health insurance plans in the Marketplace are required to offer minimum essential health benefits, which include the following items and services:

- Ambulatory patient services (outpatient care you get without being admitted to a hospital)
- Emergency services
- Hospitalization
- Maternity and newborn care (care before and after your baby is born)
- Mental health and substance use disorder services, including behavioral health treatment (this includes counseling and psychotherapy)
- Prescription drugs
- Rehabilitative and habilitative services and devices (services and devices to help people with injuries, disabilities or chronic conditions gain or recover mental and physical skills)
- Laboratory services
- Preventive and wellness services and chronic-disease management
- Pediatric services

## Grandfathered plans

A group health plan that was created on or before March 23, 2010, or an individual health insurance policy that was purchased on or before March 23, 2010, is considered a "grandfathered plan." These plans are exempted from some changes required under the ACA. That means the rights and protections offered by other plans will not be available to those with a grandfathered plan. A health plan must disclose whether it considers itself to be a grandfathered plan and must advise you how to contact the U.S. Department of Labor or the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services with questions.

## TIPS FROM Fight Back!

### Beware of healthcare enrollment scams

THE FEDERAL Trade Commission, the nation's consumer protection agency, has reported incidents of scammers trying to capitalize on healthcare enrollment. Beware of false enrollment websites trying to swindle you into buying fake health insurance. The only official site of the Health Insurance Marketplace is [www.healthcare.gov](http://www.healthcare.gov).

Don't take a call from out of the blue from people who offer to help you navigate the new healthcare market or say they're issuing mandatory new national medical cards. The same rule applies to receiving an unsolicited email, letter or text.

If you are asked for personal or bank account information so a caller can determine whether you meet the financial threshold for Affordable Care Act benefits, you're being swindled.

## Fight Back! gets social

WHAT DO YOU do to be a proactive consumer and effect positive change in the world? Send us your photos, videos and comments on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, marked #IFightBack Costco #Consumer #Connection, and we'll retweet them to and share them with the entire Costco community.

Please note we are not licensed professionals in any field. If you are seeking advice you should consult with your own licensed professional. We do not assume any liability or responsibility for the interpretation, application or accuracy of any information provided.

## Have a question for Fight Back?

Just log on to [www.fightback.com](http://www.fightback.com) or email [info@fightback.com](mailto:info@fightback.com). Questions and answers of the greatest interest to Costco members will be used in this column (with the permission of the contributor) and will be posted on [www.fightback.com](http://www.fightback.com).



## More in archives

On Costco.com, enter "Connection"; at *Online Edition*, search "David Horowitz."



Windows 8

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Access your photos and files anywhere with built-in SkyDrive

## Getting started with Windows 8



Tap Windows key  
to go to Start screen.



Get to a familiar  
desktop – select this tile  
to see the desktop.



Swipe in from the right  
to open Start, search,  
and change your settings.



Swipe in from the left  
to return to the app you  
were just using.

\*Available 10/18/2013.  
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Scan or click this ad to learn more about Windows 8.1 (see page 5).

Microsoft

# Choosing the right-size TV



**I'm shopping for a new TV during the holidays. How do I choose the right size for my room?**

**A:** There's never been a better time to buy a new television. Not only have prices dropped considerably over the years, but today's TVs are bigger, flatter, sharper and smarter.

But it can be difficult to know how big your TV should be—not just for budgetary reasons, but because you want it to look good in the room where you're putting it. A lot of it boils down to how far away you'll be when watching the television, which is referred to as the viewing distance.

With older standard-definition televisions, the industry-accepted formula was to sit back about three times the diagonal length of the screen. Under this plan, a viewer would be about 6 feet away from a 27-inch TV for comfortable viewing. This was because the scan lines on older TVs could be seen if you were too close.

But with today's much sharper high-definition television shows, movies and video games, you can sit closer, as you won't notice any such imperfections. Some experts suggest sitting back 1.5 to 2.5 times the diagonal size—not the width or height of the screen. Therefore, for a 50-inch television you'll want to sit 6 to 10 feet away.

That's the general rule of thumb and a starting point. You'll also want to consider the aesthetics of the TV in the room: Does it overwhelm the space? Also, use the width and height of the TV when calculating wall space for the right fit. The typical 60-inch TV is about 55 inches wide.

It might be helpful to use masking tape or a cut-out piece of cardboard on a wall to see how large the TV would look in your room. In the end, you should not be sitting so close as to see pixels on the screen.

On a related note, be careful not to inadvertently angle the television toward a big window or lamp, or else you might get some glare that could obstruct your view of the display somewhat (especially with glossy screens).



**What can you tell me about Windows 8.1?**

**A:** On one hand, Windows 8 was a success for Microsoft, as the company said it sold 100 mil-

**Also:**  
■ Windows improved

lion licenses within just six months of its launch. On the flipside, however, the bold new look—including the Start screen, with its colorful “live tiles”—proved somewhat intimidating to a number of users.

There were other issues, too, such as no Start button, trouble launching the Charms bar and a strong focus on touch when most PCs didn't yet have this feature.

The good news is that Windows 8.1—which can be downloaded as a free update for existing customers and will be bundled with new PCs—is being released on October 17, and it addresses much of the feedback from vocal users.

For one thing, the Start button is back in the Desktop mode, allowing you to easily access programs and settings as you did in previous versions of Windows.

A simplified and unified Search window now delivers results from the Web, your PC and your apps. Results are then displayed visually, allowing you to quickly find what you're looking for.

A bunch of apps are bundled with Windows 8.1, including an easy-to-use photo editor and another app that lets you conveniently save articles and other content (and access it on multiple devices, too). The Windows Store has a new look, including easier access to downloadable apps.

Another addition is a new lock screen that allows you to choose from a number of tile sizes, colors and backgrounds (even animated ones). Plus, you can now view a slide show based on your favorite photos.

Other new features include deeper integration with Microsoft's SkyDrive, its cloud service; the faster and more touch-friendly Internet Explorer 11 browser; a desktop boot option to start your PC in the “classic” view; an improved Snap feature for viewing multiple applications at once; and numerous bug fixes to make the overall experience better, faster and more intuitive. ■

## The Costco Connection

Costco offers a complete line of electronics in the warehouses and on Costco.com, including TVs and computers. Windows 8.1 is a free upgrade for Windows 8 users; see Costco.com (search “Windows 8.1”) for details.

## More in archives

On Costco.com, enter “Connection”; at *Online Edition*, search “Tech Connection.”



**Tablet or smartphone?**  
Scan or click here for a video about tips and tricks for Windows 8.1 (See page 5 for scanning details.)



## Ask Marc Saltzman

JOHN GOLDSTEIN

Questions about electronics or computers you purchased at Costco? Email them to: [connection@costco.com](mailto:connection@costco.com).

Or mail to:

**Q&A with Marc Saltzman**  
*The Costco Connection*  
P.O. Box 34088  
Seattle, WA 98124-1088  
or fax to (425) 313-6718.

Please include “Marc Saltzman Q&A” in the subject line. Marc will answer selected questions in this column. We regret that unpublished questions cannot be answered individually.

**Marc Saltzman,**  
a leading high-tech reporter, contributes to more than three dozen prominent publications, appears on radio and TV, and is the author of 15 books.

He's on Twitter at [@marc\\_saltzman](https://twitter.com/marc_saltzman)

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## WITH 5-LOXIN® ADVANCED, IMPROVEMENT STARTS WITHIN 7 DAYS\*

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## RECLAIM YOUR ACTIVE LIFESTYLE

Osteo Bi-Flex® presents a fresh approach in helping you manage the health of your joints.\* Why sit on the sidelines wishing you could get in the game, when there's a whole lot of jumping, dancing, working, playing, running, hiking, biking, and so much more to do?



Add Osteo Bi-Flex® Triple Strength to your joint health regimen and give yourself the tools to live an active life.\*

# Osteo Bi-Flex®



# Should we separate commercial banks from investment banks?

A BIPARTISAN GROUP of lawmakers has introduced a new version of the 1933 banking legislation (the Glass-Steagall Act) that would separate traditional commercial banks, which have savings and checking accounts insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, from financial institutions that engage in riskier, uninsured activities.

Supporters of the move say it will reduce the size of banks considered "too big to fail," offer more protection for depositors and minimize the possibility of a government bailout like the one in 2008.

Opponents argue that mixing activities had little to do with bank failures and the proposed legislation does little to protect the public from the type of devastation recently experienced. Worse, they add, it threatens to distract attention from legitimate reform efforts.

What do you think?



## Find out more about this topic on the Web:

- [www.marginalrevolution.com](http://www.marginalrevolution.com) (search "The puzzling return of Glass-Steagall")
- [www.thinkprogress.org](http://www.thinkprogress.org) (search "Break up big banks")
- [www.washingtonpost.com/blogs](http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs) (search "Warren, McCain, Glass-Steagall")
- <http://tv.msnbc.com> (search "Warren, McCain, Glass-Steagall")

# YES

## from members:

**Sherry Landers**  
Owens Cross Roads, AL  
 I prefer to make the decision as to [how my money is invested]. I do not need my commercial bank to make those choices for me.

**John G. Musial**  
Brewster, NY  
 Most consumers want checking and savings accounts, while investment banks appeal to those who have income to invest [and] advisers.

**Erin White**  
Port Angeles, WA  
 It would help prevent fraud and abuse of clients.

# NO

## from members:

**Johan Scholte**  
St. George, UT  
 It would hurt credit unions and small banks, causing higher rates for the regular person, and lead to a bailout from government.

**Trey Lewis**  
Huntsville, AL  
 It would be another law on the books that serves no purpose other than a politician being able to say he or she voted for it.

**Steve Harding**  
Hugo, MN  
 Let's let the market decide these matters with its pocket-book rather than through legislation.

## from an expert in the field:



**Sheila Bair** was chair of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation from 2006 to 2011 and is author of *Bull by the Horns: Fighting to Save Main Street from Wall Street and Wall Street from Itself* (Simon & Schuster, 2013; not available at Costco).

IN THE YEARS leading up to the Great Depression, some big banks used deposits for rampant speculation, contributing to the stock market crash of 1929 and the ensuing Great Depression. In 1933, Congress enacted Glass-Steagall, which confined deposit-taking banks to commercial banking activities such as making loans and processing payments. But Glass-Steagall was repealed in 1999 and now the big banks get into all sorts of investment-bank activities using depositors' money, including derivatives—volatile instruments that derive their value from other things, such as interest rates, currencies, bond prices, even whether people pay their mortgages.

The question is, do we want the government subsidizing them? Deposit-taking banks receive valuable government benefits such as the ability to borrow from the Federal Reserve. Their depositors are protected by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, making it easy for them to attract deposits cheaply. This government support gives Main Street households peace of mind that their money is safe and prevents destabilizing bank runs in times of crisis. And letting banks use customer

deposits to make prudent loans makes sense, because there are clear economic benefits. The customer accesses credit to start a business, buy a home, etc. The bank makes a profit from interest on the loan. It is a win for both sides.

Securities and derivatives activities, on the other hand, are frequently zero sum: One side wins only if the other side loses. Market losses can be sudden and substantial. And sometimes the bank is just trying to make a speculative profit or, worse, taking advantage of less sophisticated customers, particularly with complex derivatives.

Some argue that bad lending brought us the 2008 financial crisis. But the system could have absorbed the mortgage losses. The problem was the trillions in esoteric securities and derivatives held by large financial institutions, which accelerated and magnified those losses. The sudden market losses on those instruments were responsible for the crisis, not the underlying loans.

If a bank wants to lend out my deposits to help a family buy a car or send a kid to college, I'm OK with that. But if they want to make huge derivatives bets in London or help some hedge fund speculate on whether I will default on my mortgage, I say make them find the money elsewhere. ☐

## from an expert in the field:



**Mark J. Roe** is a professor at Harvard Law School, where he focuses on business and financial law. He is the author of *Strong Managers, Weak Owners: Political Determinants of Corporate Governance* (Oxford University Press, 2006; not available at Costco).

MANY BLAME THE financial crisis on the 1999 repeal of the long-controversial Glass-Steagall Banking Act of 1933, which had separated deposit-taking commercial banks from securities-trading investment banks. Repeal, which allowed the banks to do both under one roof, did not cause the financial crisis. Focusing on repeal as a reason for the financial crisis diverts policymakers from the real fixes that the financial system needs.

Look at which major financial institutions failed during the crisis: Lehman Brothers, AIG and the Reserve Primary Fund. None of these were deposit-taking commercial banks that Glass-Steagall's repeal set loose. AIG was a mega-insurer, not a commercial bank. Lehman was an investment bank. The Reserve Primary Fund, brought down by its purchases of IOUs from Lehman, was a money-market mutual fund.

True, major banks tottered. But they were at risk not because they had brought commercial and investment banking under one roof, but because they (mis)handled mortgage securities and investments. Mortgage lending, however, is a long-standing activity for commercial and sav-

ings banks, mostly unaffected by Glass-Steagall or its repeal.

The best case against Glass-Steagall's repeal is not that mixing investment and commercial banking caused the crisis. Rather, the best case arises from a general sense that American financial institutions have become too complicated to regulate and too big to fail even when they stay within their traditional businesses.

But overturning Glass-Steagall's repeal is unhelpful for usefully simplifying and strengthening America's banks, whose fault lines lie elsewhere, not in the line between investment and commercial banking. Thinking about whether to overturn it, and how, diverts policymakers' attention from the main issues for the future. The financial crisis revealed structural problems in banking, but they come from insufficient capital to cushion a bank's fall, and from too many financial institutions having simultaneously become too big, too interconnected and too complicated to fail.

Glass-Steagall is a distraction. The goal is to shore up the weaknesses revealed by the global financial crisis; policymakers in the U.S. and other countries should look elsewhere, not at Glass-Steagall. ☐

## SEPTEMBER DEBATE RESULTS:

Is America giving up too much privacy for security?

**81% YES  
19% NO**

Percentage reflects votes received by September 11, 2013. Results may reflect Debate being picked up by blogs.

• • • • •  
**AUGUST DEBATE RESULTS:**

Are standardized tests a fair measure of student achievement?

**YES: 10% NO: 90%**  
Percentage reflects votes received by August 31, 2013.



See Dialogue pages for more debate responses

Opinions expressed are those of the individuals or organizations represented and are presented to foster discussion. Costco and *The Costco Connection* take no position on any Debate topic.



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# Valuation evaluation

## Practical ways to boost your company's value

By Susan Schreter

WHY IS IT that an unprofitable research-stage technology company with no revenues can be worth millions more than a stable business with several years of revenues and profits?

The answer to this fiscal unfairness can be found in how businesses are valued by professional business appraisers, investors and business buyers.

"Business owners are often shocked when they discuss their company's business value with prospective investors. They believe their companies are worth a lot of money because their companies are worth a lot to them," says Patrick Colabella, a licensed business appraiser and professor at St. Johns University in New York City. "When you put your heart into a business, you expect everyone will value your work in the same way, but they don't," he adds.

Colabella, a Costco member, encourages business owners to learn more about how businesses are valued long before they want to raise capital or sell the business. Fortunately, the basics of business valuation are easy.

Business investors often refer to the factors that influence business valuation as "business fundamentals" or "investment fundamentals." Some fundamentals can add to the perceived financial value of a business, while other fundamentals can lower the perceived value of a business.

For example, businesses that operate in fast-growing markets will get a valuation boost. In contrast, businesses that operate in markets where there is shrinking customer demand will receive a valuation "haircut." Why? Because smart business buyers know that companies that operate in shrinking markets eventually cut their prices to maintain market share. Nasty price wars scare business investors. They don't want to pay top dollar today for a business that is likely to have

fewer customers and lower profits tomorrow.

Here are five more fundamentals that matter to astute business buyers and investors.

**1. Revenue predictability.** How stable is your company's revenue base? Businesses that serve customers through multiyear contracts or can prove high rates of repeat business are valued more highly than companies that have to fight for every customer year after year.

**2. Reliable cash flow.** A company's customer list says a lot about its value. Ideally, businesses want to have an impressive list of customers who pay their bills on time. Investors dislike investing in a business with high rates of customer service problems, product returns, consignment sales or discounted orders.

**3. High gross profit margins.** Businesses with a high gross profit margin have greater leeway to survive recessions and surprises. Every percentage-point gain in gross profit margin performance not only helps boost

business valuations but keeps good businesses in business.

Investors seek out businesses that generate 60 percent or higher gross profit margins or businesses that consistently deliver bigger gross profit margins than industry competitors.

**4. Brand strength.** Valuable brands that are loved by their customers receive top dollar for their products or services. This is because customers shop for what they want first and look at price second. Businesses can earn extra valuation bonus points if their brands can also be applied to other product or service categories in the future.

**5. Intellectual property value.** Businesses that own trademarks, patents, trade secrets and/or copyrights can rely on federal laws to protect their innovations from competitor misuse. But not all patents and trademarks are valuable. More valuation credit is given to intellectual property that generates revenues from licensing or truly blocks competitors from participating in fast-growing markets.

Now you know more about how business buyers—the investors who can pay you thousands or millions of dollars—may size up your company's value. If you are thinking about a new business initiative, ask yourself if it will enhance any of the fundamentals of business value listed above.

When you allocate your company's resources to initiatives that will build your company's value, you are managing your company with precision and purpose. You can do it. □

*Costco member Susan Schreter is the author of several business books, including her newest, Start On Purpose: Everything You Need to*

*Know and Do to Startup with Strength,*

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# To agree, or not to agree

**Malcolm Gladwell  
sees the value of  
pushing the envelope**

**By Bryan Reesman**

BILL WADMAN

**C**onsidering that author Malcolm Gladwell explores tales of long shots turned success stories in his inspiring new book, *David and Goliath: Underdogs, Misfits and the Art of Battling Giants*, it might be tempting to compare him to a humble David who became a writing Goliath. But the fact is that the celebrated author and *New Yorker* staff writer achieved his current fame serendipitously. His career and worldview have been powered by the passion of his convictions, as well as his ability to absorb ideas and learn from his subjects. No toppling required.

Despite his incredible success as a literary giant—four international best-sellers, well-paid corporate and collegiate speaking engagements, honorary degrees and being named an influential person by *Time* magazine—Gladwell is a down-to-earth individual. When we meet for a lunchtime interview at Morandi, a picturesque Italian trattoria in New York's West Village, the slender, curly-haired writer, who recently turned 50 but looks years younger, inquires if he is late, although we are both early. He is casually dressed in a T-shirt, shorts and running shoes. He likes to ride his bike around town and has become an avid runner again; he was a champion runner in high school in Canada and is a huge sports fan.

### Inspired by the improbable

Gladwell is the opposite of disagreeable, the word he uses to describe many of the underdogs chronicled in his new book, people who overcame perceived disadvantages to change their lives and the world. The word is not meant to be a stigma but a way to identify those people who, through means, motivation and even hubris, managed to make their mark in unusual and unorthodox ways.

These disagreeable folks include Gary Cohn, the president and chief operating officer of Goldman Sachs, who learned to use his verbal skills and chutzpah to compensate for his dyslexia; the Impressionist painters, who, after mostly being rejected by the prestigious Salon in Paris, started their own modest art gallery to gain notoriety; Wyatt Walker, Martin Luther King Jr.'s right-hand man, who knew how to strategize and how to manipulate the media to advance the cause of civil rights; and Emil Freireich, the blustery, imposing doctor who used unconventional and even controversial means to battle childhood leukemia.

"Doing something disagreeable is doing something that is frowned upon by your peers, that is offensive to your peers and that requires you as a person to take extraordinary social risks," Gladwell tells *The Connection*.

**"I write for people who are curious and don't mind having their beliefs challenged."**

—Malcolm Gladwell

"Sometimes that strays into things that are downright questionable. In Freireich's case, he was breaking lots of rules, but his argument would've been the rules are dumb. In retrospect, he was right. He also had to be cold-blooded, like when I tell the story about him jabbing the needles into the kids to get the bone marrow. It's really hard to do. Most people didn't want to do it and were looking for reasons not to do it. He didn't let those kinds of considerations get in the way of what he knew had to be done, and I think that's an incredibly disagreeable act and an incredibly heroic act at the same time. I think he's an extraordinary figure."

### Beginnings of brilliance

There is a bit of the disagreeable in Gladwell's own family. The writer was born to an English father and Jamaican mother who met in college in England. "For a black person and a white person to marry in the late 1950s was a fairly radical act, so they're not shrinking violets," observes Gladwell. "My father is quite indifferent to what the world thinks. He does what he thinks is right. So there's a tradition of iconoclasm in my family." He feels that seeing the world through the "unfamiliar eyes" of outsiders,

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*David and Goliath* is available in most Costco warehouses.

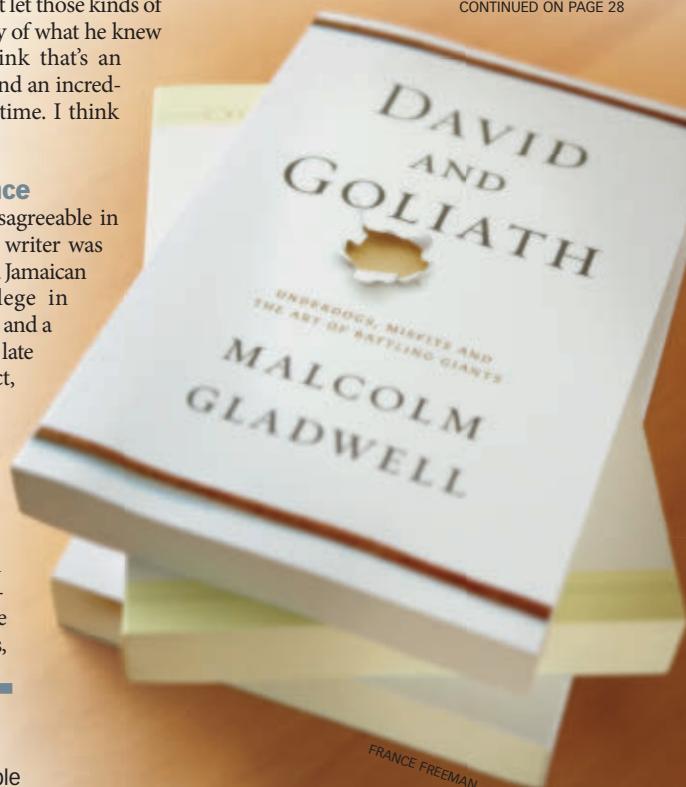
of immigrants, has been a real advantage and served him well in his journalistic endeavors.

The seeds of Gladwell's career were sown during his formative years. After his British birth, the family moved around, including spending time in Jamaica, but Gladwell essentially grew up in Ontario, Canada. His father was a professor of mathematics and engineering at the University of Waterloo, and his mother was a psychotherapist. "My mother is a wonderful writer who has the gift of saying complicated things very simply and clearly," says Gladwell. "I always wanted to write like her."

After graduating from the University of Toronto's Trinity College in the summer of 1984 with a degree in history, Gladwell landed a gig writing for *American Spectator* magazine for a few months. He then worked for the now-defunct *Insight* magazine for a year, did a few odd jobs, then landed at *The Washington Post* in 1987, writing about science and business and becoming their New York bureau chief.

Once his tenure at that position ended, Gladwell did not want to return to Washington, D.C. He had already written four or five stories for *The New Yorker*, so they felt comfortable hiring him as a staff writer in 1996. He

CONTINUED ON PAGE 28



FRANCE FREEMAN

## MALCOLM GLADWELL

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 27

has been there ever since and published five books since 2000: *The Tipping Point: How Little Things Make a Big Difference*; *Blink: The Power of Thinking Without Thinking*; *Outliers: The Story of Success*; *What the Dog Saw: And Other Adventures*; and the new *David and Goliath*. His latest tome took more than two and a half years to write while he was also working on stories for *The New Yorker*.

### Taking time to reflect

The way Gladwell views the world is refreshing. Whether he's discussing how a spontaneously strategic Vietnam vet beat a highly prepared Pentagon team during pre-Iraq war games in *Blink*, analyzing the time and place factors that led to Bill Gates rising to prominence in *Outliers* or chronicling underdog ascensions in *David and Goliath*, the author espouses clarity of thought, learning to sift through and filter out the noise of the world to focus on what is essential to one's life, and to perceive people and situations for who and what they are rather than what one thinks they are.

"I feel that people are experience-rich and theory-poor," asserts Gladwell. "That is to say, most people have lots and lots and lots of experiences but don't have the time to try to make sense of them. It's a luxury to be able to sit and theorize and read psychologists, sociologists and historians and to attach explanations to events. The reason people read books like my own is that they're searching for those kinds of explanations, of ways of making sense of things. There is this tremendous body of knowledge in the world of academia where extraordinary numbers of incredibly thoughtful people have taken the time to examine on a really profound level the way we live our lives and who we are and where we've been. That brilliant learning sometimes gets trapped in

academia and never sees the light of day. I'm trying to give people access to all of that brilliant thinking. It's a way of going back to college long after you've graduated."

Ideas have always propelled Gladwell's writing, which is clear when interviewing him. While some authors or intellectuals gesticulate dramatically, he is rather soft-spoken and thoughtful, but still passionate, in his delivery, sometimes surreptitiously fiddling with his utensils as we await our meal. He quips that if you think going to a library is an exciting event, you will probably enjoy his books.

"I write for people who are curious and who don't mind having their beliefs challenged," he says. "I don't shock people's belief systems, but I do nudge them sometimes.

Some people are fine with that, and those are my readers." Several authors and columnists have challenged assertions or claims in his books, but that at least proves he knows how to stimulate debate among his readers.

Has his work on all of his books given him a new worldview or altered the one he has? "The last three books in particular have made me very suspicious of the way that all of us as human beings react to the world," the author replies. "The assumptions that we carry around in our head aren't very good. Our first impressions of things can sometimes be really terrible. This book is basically about how we look at situations and misread them. The more I write these books, the less convinced I am of my own inherent wisdom. I've convinced myself that I'm pretty bad at making sense of the world and need a lot of help."

Although described by many friends as shy, Malcolm Gladwell has become a celebrated public speaker, presenting his ideas in arenas ranging from colleges to corporations and TED talks.

### Accidental achievements

Appreciative of the supportive, nurturing middle-class Canadian background from which he emerged, Gladwell does not take his position for granted. "I come from a very unpretentious family," he says. His older brothers, Jeffrey and Graham, and his parents still live in southern Ontario. Jeffrey, two years older, is an elementary school principal, and Graham, four years older, works in the chicken business.

"It's funny: I read recently that Canada has never produced a luxury brand," Gladwell notes. "It's kind of fascinating, but we can't do it. It's not in our DNA. Canada is a deeply unpretentious place. You can't grow up in Canada and have all kinds of airs."

Looking back at his remarkable journalistic journey thus far, Gladwell acknowledges his good fortune and favorable circumstances. "I never had any great desire to be well-known or to sell a lot of books," he confesses. "I've only ever just wanted to do my own thing, and all of this happened just as an accident. Maybe that's paradoxically one of the reasons why I've done well. People sense that I'm doing things out of pure enjoyment. I'm not pandering to an audience or following a formula, I'm just writing about cool stuff that interests me, and people respond to that." ■

## The Gladwell school of thought

WHEN IT COMES to inspiration, Malcolm Gladwell says that he simply writes about topics that he has been interested in over the years. His unique perspective comes from looking at people and events that fascinate him yet are often removed from his personal experience.

"I'm always an outsider in these worlds," he stresses. "When I write about the field of psychology, I'm not bound by any of the assumptions and preconceptions within the field. I'm just

looking at it as a kind of tourist, and that's very freeing. I spend a lot of time in libraries. What's great about a library is everything is all mixed up together. There isn't a sociology library and a psychology library and a history library; there's one building with all that stuff in it. So that's how I see the world of ideas: It's all mixed up together. There's no reason to just hang out in one corner of the intellectual world. You should be able to go all around." —BR



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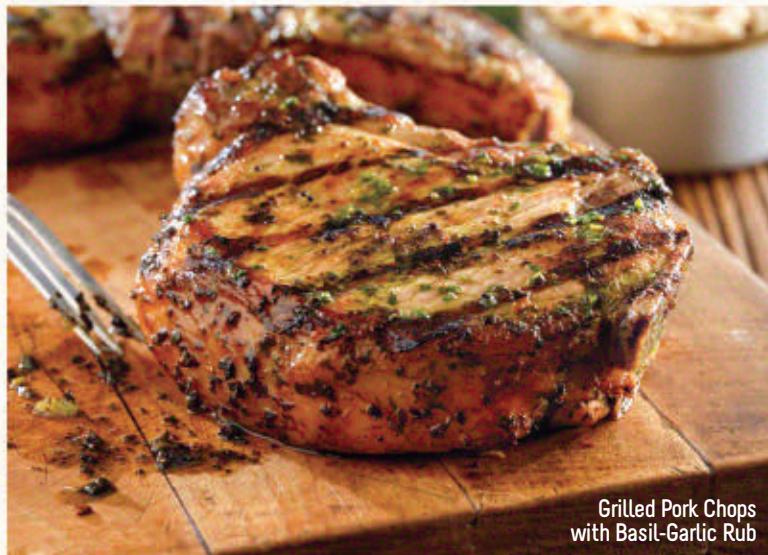
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# Score Big with Pork – Fall's MVP

Grilled or slow-cooked, pork is the season pro!

Football season is upon us, and that can only mean one thing: It's time to tailgate. Whether you're firing up the grill for a pregame backyard get-together or slow cooking at the stadium before kickoff, there are plenty of dishes to choose from – but this year, the clear winner is pork.



No matter what team you're rooting for, the secret to tackling your game-day gathering is serving a meal that's tasty and easy to cook – and pork offers unmatched versatility in terms of flavor and preparation methods. These four cuts are perfect on the grill or in the slow cooker and pair well with all kinds of bold flavors.



Tangy Grilled Back Ribs

#### Pork Ribs:

Whether you're craving back, country-style or St. Louis-style spareribs, ribs are an easy, popular food to enjoy on game day.



Cuban Pork Tenderloin

#### Pork Chops:

Rib, sirloin and top loin are among the most popular cuts of pork because they don't require long cooking times.

#### Pork Tenderloin:

This mild, tender cut is a favorite when complemented with spice rubs or marinades.

#### Pork Loin Roast:

Roasts are delicious brined or rubbed with a spice mixture and barbecued.

#### Did you know?

Some healthy facts about pork:

- Today's most popular cuts of pork have 16 percent less total fat and 27 percent less saturated fat than they did more than 20 years ago.
- Cuts of pork that come from the loin – including chops and roasts – are the leanest available.
- Ounce for ounce, pork tenderloin is as lean as skinless chicken breast.

#### Game-Day Pork

No matter how much time you have before kickoff, plenty of recipes – such as Spicy St. Louis-style spareribs, Teriyaki Pork Chops and slow-cooked Perfect Pulled Pork – are touchdown-worthy.

For a dish like Grilled Pork Chops with Basil-Garlic Rub (left), marinate the meat for just 15 to 30 minutes in a tangy, homemade sauce. Then, before the game, you'll only need to grill them for 10 to 12 minutes. This flavorful recipe will ensure you won't be distracted by hunger when it's time for the game-winning play.

#### Tips for the Grill

Grilling pork on game day is easier than you think, especially when you keep these tips in mind:

- Prevent meat from sticking on the grill by using clean racks and lightly coating them with vegetable oil or a nonstick vegetable oil spray.
- Preheat the grill to the proper temperature to ensure the pork is seared quickly and to give it a flavorful crust.

#### Cook to Perfection

When cooking pork, the most important thing to remember is to avoid overcooking it.

The National Pork Board recommends cooking fresh pork to an internal temperature between 145°F (medium-rare) and 160°F (medium), with a three-minute rest. And be sure to use a digital thermometer to ensure an accurate reading.



► Scan or click this ad for more tasty pork ideas (see page 5);  
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## Puerto Rican Shredded Pork SERVES 4 TO 6

- 2 to 3-lb. boneless sirloin tip pork roast
- 4 to 5 cloves garlic, skins removed, crushed
- 1 tbsp. vegetable oil
- 1 tbsp. cumin
- 1/2 tbsp. coarse salt
- 1 tsp. dried oregano
- 4 oranges, juiced, or 1 cup freshly squeezed orange juice
- 4 limes, juiced

Poke 3 to 5 holes in pork with sharp knife; stuff with half the crushed garlic. Warm oil in large skillet over medium-high heat. Add pork and brown on all sides, 6 to 8 minutes.

Combine remaining ingredients in blender and blend 3 to 5 seconds until evenly combined. Place pork in slow cooker, pour liquid mixture over pork and let marinate about 10 minutes on each side.

Turn slow cooker on low; set timer for 8 hours. After 8 hours, remove pork and shred using two forks on large cutting board. Remove all liquid from slow cooker except 1 cup and return pork to pot. Let cook another 15 to 30 minutes.

Serve shredded pork in lettuce wraps or in corn tortillas. Top with pico de gallo, chopped cilantro and avocado.



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This message funded by America's Pork Producers and the Pork Checkoff.

# Sealed to perfe



PHOTO COURTESY OF FOODSAVER

## Break out of the leftover rut with these fresh ideas for the FoodSaver vacuum sealer

By Scott Jones

KITCHENS ACROSS THE country are stocked with gadgets and small appliances, most promising to improve or simplify our busy lives. Many under-deliver on that proposition, but not so for the FoodSaver ([www.foodsaver.com](http://www.foodsaver.com)). Be it in a household of two or 12, this handy device has real, practical benefits: everything from making the most of batch cooking to preserving seasonal fruits and vegetables to taking advantage of buying in bulk. All of which can save home cooks time and money.

### Homemade convenience food

Batch cooking is a timesaving secret weapon, whether you are making soups, stews, roasts or something on the grill. Double or triple recipes, then freeze in specific portion sizes for future use.

"With the holidays just around the corner, this is a smart way to get ahead," affirms Costco member Tyler Brown. When this Nashville chef is not running the award-winning Capitol Grille in the venerable Hermitage Hotel, he's preparing home-cooked meals for his growing family. "On weekends I make extra casseroles, braised meats and pots of beans and soups, then use my FoodSaver to vacuum-seal everything for the freezer. Not only does this jump-start weeknight meals, but it also

### The Costco Connection

The FoodSaver Vacuum Sealing System® and bags are available in most Costco locations and on [Costco.com](http://Costco.com).

# ction



allows us to plan ahead for Thanksgiving and Christmas," says Brown.

Don't be intimidated about using the FoodSaver for high-water-content foods such as soups and cooked meats with gravy. Brown has two steps for success. First, pre-freeze items in unsealed bags placed on a baking sheet. Then, once the liquid solidifies (about one to two hours), vacuum out the air by selecting the "moist" setting for a long-lasting seal.

Brown also recommends double-sealing the bags. "All you do is seal it the traditional way, then shift the bag slightly and seal again, giving you an extra level of security," he says. When you are ready to reheat, simply slip the bag into a pot of simmering water or pop it in the microwave, making a small cut to release steam.

## Seal in freshness

You can also use the FoodSaver to lock in the flavor of fresh produce, especially early-fall goodies from your garden or local farmers market. While it's not the same as shelf-stable canning, vacuum-sealing and freezing produce is an effective way to preserve color, texture, taste and valuable nutrients.

Costco member and vegetable aficionado Sheri Castle says the FoodSaver is also the best way to keep unwanted freezer burn at bay. "This is how I freeze everything from butter beans to lady peas to

**Batch cooking is a timesaving secret weapon, whether you are making soups, stews, roasts or something on the grill.**

sweet corn," remarks the author of *The New Southern Garden Cookbook* (The University of North Carolina Press, 2011).

Castle is quick to point out, however, that vegetables must be blanched (cooked briefly in boiling water) before freezing to deactivate food-degrading enzymes. Storing them in microwave-ready Freeze 'N Steam bags makes the final cooking a snap.

## Bulk up

Buying family favorites in bulk at Costco leads to all kinds of money-saving magic. For example, you can buy a whole beef tenderloin, then cut it into steaks. Talk about jaw-dropping savings. What's more, when vacuum-sealed, the steaks will last in the freezer for up to two years.

The same goes for large packages of ground beef. Portion out amounts suitable for recipes such as meatloaf or sloppy Joes; pat some into hamburgers or meatballs. And don't forget about fresh chicken breasts. One strategy is to bake several at a time, then chop and freeze the meat in 3-cup portions to keep on hand for casseroles and salads.

The FoodSaver is also a boon for keeping bulk dry goods such as cereals, granola and nuts fresh and crunchy. "My wife and I use it all the time to make snack packs for our kids," says Brown, who stocks the family car with individual on-the-go munchies for driving around town as well as longer road trips. "No more stale cereal mix," he says with a smile.

Whatever your needs, the multidimensional FoodSaver can help you and your family enjoy homemade food on even your busiest days. ☐

*Scott Jones ([www.jonesishungry.com](http://www.jonesishungry.com)) is a food, wine and travel writer.*

## Garlic Pork with Roasted Red Potatoes

*Courtesy of FoodSaver*

Double this recipe to make meal-time a cinch later in the week. Preserve leftovers with the FoodSaver vacuum seal system.

### Nonstick cooking spray

- ½ teaspoon paprika
- ½ teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 pound pork tenderloin
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 6 new potatoes, scrubbed and quartered
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon black pepper



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Preheat oven to 425 F. Coat a 13-by-9-inch baking pan with cooking spray. Combine paprika and garlic powder in small bowl; sprinkle evenly over pork. Coat large skillet with cooking spray; heat over medium-high heat. Brown pork 3 minutes per side. Transfer to baking pan. Add oil, potatoes and oregano to skillet; toss to coat. Arrange potatoes around pork. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Bake 22 minutes or until barely pink in center. Transfer pork to carving board; tent with foil and let stand 5 minutes. Stir potatoes; tent with foil and let stand 5 minutes. Slice pork and serve with potatoes. Serves 4 to 6.



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# SHELLLICIOUS!

## Jumbo Stuffed Shells with Beef and Spinach (serves 4)

- 1 tablespoon butter or olive oil
- 2 oz. onion, minced or finely chopped
- Optional: 8 oz. lean ground beef or Italian sausage
- 1 teaspoon minced garlic
- 4 oz. spinach, chopped
- 1 (15-oz.) container ricotta cheese (whole milk)
- $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon oregano (fresh or dried)
- $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon basil (fresh or dried)
- 1 egg, lightly beaten
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1 box (min 10 oz) jumbo shells (cooked al dente only!)
- 1 jar Kirkland Signature Marinara Sauce
- $1\frac{1}{2}$  cups grated Parmesan or Asiago cheese



**Preparation:** In a sauté pan over medium heat, melt butter and sauté onion until translucent. Add the ground beef, brown 5 to 8 minutes, drain. Add garlic and spinach, and continue sautéing for 2 more minutes; remove from heat and cool. In a large mixing bowl, combine ricotta, oregano, basil, and the ground beef mixture with a spatula. Add the lightly beaten egg, salt and pepper, and continue mixing. Stuff the filling into the cooked and cooled jumbo shells using a spoon. Lay the shells side-by-side in a lightly sauced or oiled glass or stoneware baking dish, cover with marinara sauce, top with Parmesan cheese and bake at 350°F for 40 minutes. Allow to cool for 10 minutes before serving.

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# Sprout shout-out

## Showing some love for the beleaguered Brussels sprout

**By Hana Medina**

FOR GENERATIONS, MANY a tantrum has been thrown at the dinner table over Brussels sprouts. Either you love them or you hate them, but, regardless, you are not leaving the table until you finish them.

I didn't try Brussels sprouts until well into my adulthood, but that's when I discovered that these intimidating little balls of green were actually pretty delicious. How could Brussels sprouts be the root of so many mealtime horror stories?

Poor preparation is a likely cause (spoiler alert: Don't boil them). Armed with the right techniques and seasonings (or, if all else fails, cheese and bacon), I'm convinced that you can convert even the biggest Brussels sprouts haters.

### Pick and store

When picking your Brussels sprouts (which really do hail from Brussels, Belgium), look for those that are bright green and firm. Slight discoloration on the stem is OK, but the stem should not be very dark, according to Katie Harrelle, sales and Brussels sprouts commodity manager at Ippolito International, a Costco supplier. Browning leaves are a sign that the sprouts are losing their freshness. Store them in a plastic or paper bag in your refrigerator's crisping drawer. Harrelle also recommends storing the Brussels sprouts at 33 degrees, which can allow them to last at least three weeks.

### Does a body good

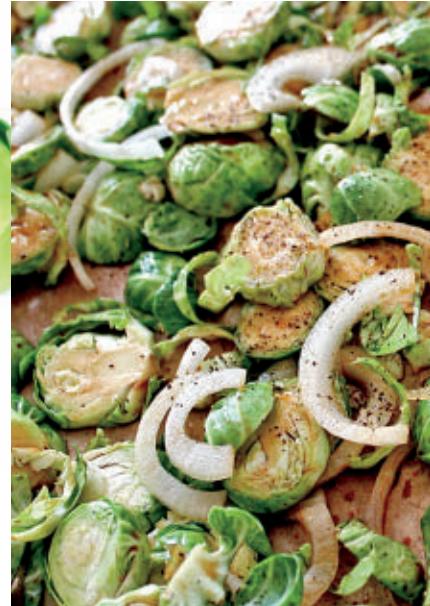
Brussels sprouts are good sources of fiber and folate, high in vitamins K and C, low in

sodium and free of saturated fat and cholesterol. If you need a bigger incentive to plate this cabbage relative, many medical studies have shown the vegetable is a cancer fighter. The American Institute for Cancer Research says that Brussels sprouts can "help our bodies detoxify undesirable compounds, possibly stopping cancer before it starts."

### Prep techniques

Some Brussels sprouts are sold on the stalk on which they grow (Costco's are trimmed). Cut the sprouts from the stalk, if applicable. Then rinse them thoroughly and cut off the white stems on the base of each sprout, taking care not to cut through all of the leaves. Peel off a few outer leaves, especially if any have brown spots. Now they are ready for any recipe.

Grilling, roasting or steaming the sprouts brings out a sweet, mild flavor and also retains many of the vegetable's healthful properties. Harrelle says that heavily boiling the sprouts can make them mushy and bland (possibly the reason they top the "most-hated" list for some) and destroys most of their nutritional value.



### Soy-Glazed Brussels Sprouts

Brussels sprouts will absorb the flavors that surround them. Marinating them is one way to reintroduce the vegetable to those who are leery.

**6 cups thinly sliced Brussels sprouts  
1 cup thinly sliced onion  
2 tablespoons soy sauce  
2 tablespoons sesame oil  
1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar**

Preheat oven to 450 F. Prepare Brussels sprouts (see "Prep techniques"). Cut them into thin slices. Toss Brussels sprouts, onion, soy sauce and sesame oil together in a large bowl until well coated. Spread mixture in a single layer on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper. Bake 15 minutes, or until tender. Remove from oven and sprinkle balsamic vinegar on top. Toss and serve. Serves 4 to 6.

*Recipe courtesy of Jeanette Chen, Costco member and blogger at <http://jeanetteshealthyliving.com>.*

### Roasted Brussels Sprouts

A favorite and common Brussels sprout preparation is simply roasting them.

**1 pound Brussels sprouts  
2 tablespoons olive oil  
Sea salt and pepper to taste**

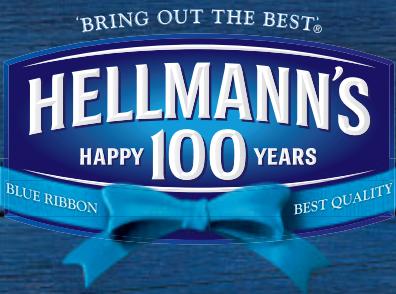
Preheat oven to 400 F. After preparing the sprouts (see "Prep techniques"), chop them in half lengthwise. Place the sprouts, halved side up, on a baking sheet. Drizzle with olive

oil and sprinkle with sea salt and pepper. Roast for 20 minutes or until tender. Serves up to 4.

**Easy additions:** Minced garlic, thyme, chopped onions or seasoning salt (such as Johnny's) instead of salt and pepper. **Cheese and bacon variation:** Line baking sheet with parchment paper. After preparing the original recipe, add chopped, cooked bacon and a handful (or more) of shredded cheddar cheese a minute or two before removing sprouts from oven. Remove, toss and serve.

### The Costco Connection

Brussels sprouts are available in most Costco warehouses.



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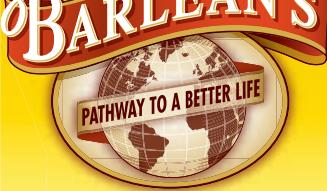
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FRANCE FREEMAN

# Cutting-edge(s) technology

## Staying sharp in the kitchen requires the right knives

By Barb Freda

A WALL OF sharp, shining cutting utensils, each slightly different, with different handles, widths, shapes, blade lengths and more, meets every knife buyer these days. Specialty knives are no longer exclusive to the culinary pros. These days, home kitchens sport fine knives too.

There are knives for chopping, slicing, peeling, boning and filleting; knives that once only a butcher owned. American knives, German knives, Japanese knives.

Luckily, Costco member Kathleen Flinn, author of *The Sharper Your Knife, The Less You Cry* (Penguin, 2008) and *The Kitchen Counter Cooking School* (Viking Adult, 2011) has made it a mission to help aspiring chefs understand their knives.

"One of the first things I tell people to look for is the steel and feel. Look for steel with the highest carbon count. More carbon is always a plus: Higher-carbon steel blades take a finer, cleaner, sharper edge, and they hold the edge longer. Lower-quality steel blades are harder to sharpen and won't maintain an edge," she says.

Then there's the feel. "Make sure you get to hold the knife. Pay attention to the weight. The feel matters more than how expensive a knife is or who made it, because if you get a great value in a knife, but it's

not very comfy for you, you won't use it," she notes.

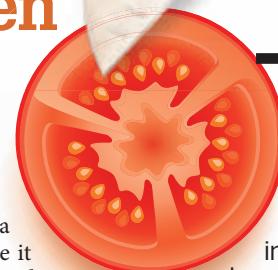
Flinn also likes knives with a bolster, a flare of the blade where it meets the handle. The bolster takes dozens more steps to forge and indicates quality, as does a full tang, which means the metal of the blade runs the entire length of the handle.

When looking for value, knife sets can offer affordable options. "You often get higher-quality products for a good price when knives are sold as sets," says Flinn. "Don't calculate the value on the number of knives in the set, but on the quality of the knives in the set."

### Must-have knives

**Chef's knife.** A chef's knife is used for all-around chopping. It has a blade wide enough that the user can grip the handle and chop without banging knuckles. Flinn says most chefs like an 8-inch chef's knife, so that's probably a good place to start knife testing.

Choose between the classic wedge-shaped chef's knife and a Japanese santoku knife, which has a different shape and shallow indentations on the blade. "Food doesn't stick as easily, and you should be



### The Costco Connection

Kai Pure Komachi 2, J.A. Henckels and KitchenAid ceramic knife sets are available in most Costco warehouses. Ryuu and Saber knives, as well as a Master Grade commercial knife sharpener, are available on Costco.com.

able to get more consistent slices, but a lot of this is your personal preference," Flinn says.

**Serrated slicer.** Thin and long, a slicer cuts through more delicate foods such as breads and desserts, and carves thin slices of roasts without dragging against the meat. Serrated knives hold their edge longer, says Flinn.

**Paring knife.** Used for small jobs and quick trims, these knives have short blades and short handles.

### Should-have knives

What would Flinn buy next, after the basics? Kitchen novices want to know.

**Shears.** Kitchen shears cut through poultry bones, snip herbs, trim asparagus and more. They are not a knife at all, but it's the first thing Flinn names. "Once you have shears, you will wonder how you lived without them," she says.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 43



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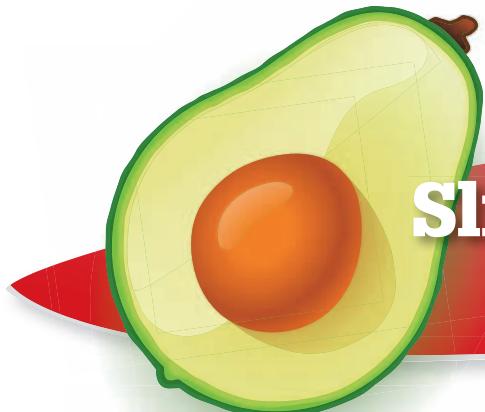


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## CUTTING EDGES

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 41

**Flexible fillet knife.** Flinn likes the flexible fillet knife, which has a thin, flexing blade, usually straight on top, sometimes curved, with a narrow, curved knife edge. She uses it to slice chicken breasts into thin fillets as well as for filleting fish.

Knives are truly tools of the trade, and good tools make any job, cooking included, easier. "And more knives," says Flinn, "make your job easier." ☐

*Freelance writer Barb Freda loves her knives, and still uses the blades she purchased for cooking school in the '80s.*

# Slicing through the options

THERE IS ALWAYS a place for traditional steel-bladed knives in the kitchen, but new technology offers new options.

**Ceramic knives.** These blades are made of a specially hardened ceramic that, according to makers, is second only to diamond in its hardness. The benefits?

- Edge retention. Ceramic knives hold a sharp edge longer than many of their steel blade counterparts.
- Purity. The ceramic surface won't taint the cut edge of food with any sort of metallic taste.
- No rust. Ceramic blades are not affected by acids, water or salts. They won't rust, pit or discolor.

▪ Lightness. Ceramic knives are up to half the weight of traditional knives.

▪ Cleaning. Because of edge retention and resistance to corrosion, many ceramic knives are dishwasher-safe.

Ceramic knives shouldn't replace all knives. Because ceramic can break, don't reach for a ceramic knife to bone a chicken or cut into super-hard vegetables (some root vegetables, for example). And because they are ceramic, they won't hang on a magnetic knife strip.

Also newly popular are **resin-coated stainless steel knives**. The coating protects the blades, makes slicing smooth and clean, keeps cleanup easy and, like ceramic blades, resists corrosion. These knives come in bright colors and because the resin coats steel, they still hang on a magnetic knife bar (most also come with a sheath, which protects the blades and fingers if the knives must be stored in a drawer).—BF

ILLUSTRATIONS: CHRIS A RUSNAK

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# October Buyers' Picks

FRANCE FREEMAN



**Shannon Axthelm**  
Small Electrics  
Buyer

IF YOU'VE seen my Buyer's Picks before, you know I don't choose products just to sell them. I believe in them. One product I truly love is the Sonicare rechargeable toothbrush. You could say I'm sort of a Sonicare-aholic. The latest brush that we are offering is the Sonicare FlexCare, and it's one of my favorites.

I especially like the Go Care (quick) mode, since I am always in a hurry. Our FlexCare comes with DiamondClean brush heads, which I absolutely love. When I first saw them, I was skeptical. They supposedly provide a superior clean because they have more bristles and their diamond shape provides better plaque and stain removal than a manual toothbrush. Well, I have to admit, they do. My teeth have never

felt cleaner. My daughter loves hers so much she put stickers on her handle to make sure there was no doubt it's hers.

Costco sells a full set that includes two FlexCare handles, two DiamondClean brush heads, two travel cases, one travel charger and one UV sanitizer with an integrated charger. The UV sanitizer is great because it helps you keep bacteria away from your brush head. On top of everything, Costco sells the Sonicare FlexCare for about 40 percent less than comparable sets sold elsewhere. C



FRANCE FREEMAN



**Michelle Husby**  
Home Textiles  
Buyer

THE TOUCH and feel of the fabrics in blankets and throws at Costco make these items member favorites each year, yet we are always looking to improve our products. I'm pleased to say that this year the fabrics are softer and silkier than ever before.

The improved softness is due to continued development of the yarn-manufacturing process, which recently added additional steaming, ironing, carding and brushing treatments. The result allows Costco to provide some of the highest-quality blankets on the market.

Members can find these velvety yarns in the new Super Luxurious Throw, the Ultimate Sherpa Throw and the licensed throws for kids, which include Disney



Princesses, Hello Kitty, Cars, Planes, Spider-Man, Monsters University, Angry Birds and Iron Man designs. Even babies will grab the Little Miracles Snuggly & Cuddly three-piece set, containing two cuddly blankets and a plush toy.

Blankets and throws make fantastic gifts for anyone in your tight-knit circle. They're versatile and functional and come in a wide range of designs and colors to fit any age or décor. Whether you're relaxing on the couch or adding warmth to your bedroom, you will fall in love (or asleep) with these cozy fabrics. C

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# An assurance of quality

## Getting what you paid for

WHEN BUYING SMALL appliances or other housewares, how do Costco members know a manufacturer's claims are accurate?

Costco's quality assurance (QA) department supports the company's buyers, globally, to ensure the quality and consistency of products offered by Costco worldwide. Using 11 companies and hundreds of worldwide locations, QA works with buyers and suppliers to make sure expectations are met. In-house testing may also occur.

Some of the tests performed are:

**Production testing.** Product samples are randomly selected and sent by the manufacturer to a Costco-designated third-party testing lab. They are tested against federal and state requirements as well as industry standards, Costco performance expectations and buyer specifications. Testing protocols are developed, collaboratively, among the buyers, QA staff and testing labs. Tests performed include checking products for colorfastness, lead content, required labeling, choking hazards, electrical safety, material identification, assembly instructions and usability, extended use and product claim verification.

**Inspections.** A qualified third-party inspector, selected by Costco, is sent to the production floor of the factory where the item is being produced. The inspector compares lab report data, approval samples (if available) and/or written production specifications for the items. Items are checked for consistency of design, color, size, fit and finish, aesthetics, functionality and more.

### Packaging performance testing.

Packaged-product performance and durability tests are conducted according to the International Safe Transit Association standards to show how well a packaged product will travel. Using special test equipment, boxed items are dropped from different angles and heights to assess the durability of the packaging through simulated normal shipment situations. The carton may also be subjected to extended testing to simulate other transit conditions.

**Factory evaluations.** Factories are inspected to determine whether they are capable of producing the item assigned to it. Testing for employee training, available technology, machine maintenance and more may also occur.



FRANCE FREEMAN

Some products may carry NSF certification, which signifies they have been tested by one of the most respected independent certification organizations in existence today.

Costco Vice President Craig Wilson, who oversees food and non-foods quality assurance, says, "One of the most important aspects of our QA program is to consistently inspect our products and suppliers to assure that our specifications are being met and our members are getting the quality that our buyers are expecting when they select and buy items."

—Steve Fisher

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# Where the glass is greener

PHOTOS COURTESY OF ARC INTERNATIONAL

## Luminarc leads the way in green-sensitive manufacturing

By Hana Medina

MAKING GLASS CAN be an environmentally harmful process: Emissions from the glass-melting furnace can release carbon dioxide, nitrogen oxides and other pollutants into the air, damaging the atmosphere. That fact is a key reason Costco buyers were impressed by glassware manufacturer Luminarc, a global company aimed at innovating cleaner manufacturing processes while bringing top-quality glassware to consumers.

Luminarc is a brand of family-owned Arc International, the largest tabletop glassware producer in the world. Luminarc produces glass dinnerware, drinkware, mixing bowls, measuring cups, pitchers and food-storage containers. Arc's proprietary formulas led to the development of Kwarx and Diamax, break-resistant, dishwasher-safe fine crystal totally free of any heavy metals typically associated with crystal.

Most Luminarc glassware sold in U.S. Costco warehouses is made in their Millville, New Jersey, plant, which produces 1 million pieces of glassware a day. That figure is included in the 6 million total pieces manufactured daily in Arc facilities in France, China, the United Arab Emirates and Russia.

With all of that production, Arc keeps energy consumption and green efforts at the forefront, a practice the company initiated with early recycling efforts in the 1920s. In 2003, Philippe Durand, Arc's principal owner at the time, who had a strong commitment to social and industrial issues, led Arc to sign the United Nations Global Compact, which, among many initiatives, promised a deeper commitment to protecting the environment. While every Arc facility engages in green

efforts, here are a few of the ways they cut down their footprint at the Millville plant.

**Emissions reduction.** Over the last year, newly installed emissions scrubbers reduced the plant's primary emissions by 75 percent. This move surpassed every environmental regulation, making it the cleanest glass-manufacturing facility of its kind in the world, according to the EPA. "Our stacks exhaust into very high-tech filtration equipment," explains Jack Kontes, director of marketing for Arc International. "Inside our system we have filters that trap particulates. Ammonia and sorbent material is injected into the filtration system while air is pulsed periodically to continually clean the filters. Our filters have a special treatment that causes a chemical reaction with the ammonia, radically reducing the nitrogen oxides."

Kontes says this \$40 million investment also helped expand the plant's production capacity. "It has been challenging and costly at times to implement some of the greener processes. It takes a lot of time and coordination, but it is well worth it and we are proud of what we have accomplished so far," he says.

**Waste-heat recovery.** The Millville plant's three furnaces burn at 3,000 F, giving off a lot of scorching heat. Rather than being released into the air, the heat exhausted from the furnace is used to heat incoming furnace air. This process aids in more efficient combustion, reducing emissions and energy usage.

**Recycled glass.** After production, unused or waste glass, called cullet, is mixed with raw materials to create new batches of glass. "Within our batch, depending on what we're making at the time, between 15 and 40 percent is always postproduction waste glass," Kontes tells *The Connection*. Incorporating cullet helps lower furnace temperatures, reducing energy consumption by 5 to 10 percent.

**Organic inks.** Forty-five percent of Luminarc's decorated glassware is embellished using organic inks, which are free of heavy metals. Kontes says the ovens don't have to be as hot or

## SUPPLIER PROFILE

**Company:** Arc International**Founder/owners:** Established in 1825 by Alexandre des Lyons de Noircarme; owned by the Durand family since 1926**Employees:** 12,200 worldwide**Address (U.S.):**

601 S. Wade Blvd., Millville, NJ 08332

**Phone:** 1-800-257-7470**Email:** donna.muller@arc-intl.com**Website:** www.arc-na.com**Items at Costco:** 20-piece drinkware set; various items rotate throughout the year.

**Comments about Costco:** "Costco is very supportive of companies that make products in the USA, and we like that they work with companies that are involved in sustainable actions. We're definitely one of those companies."

—Jack Kontes, director of marketing for Arc International



bake as long as with other inks to cure and bond the ink to the glass, resulting in further energy savings.

**Packaging reduction.** Luminarc consumes a lot of cardboard to decrease breakage. To reduce their needs, they have engineered compact and durable packaging, using recycled cardboard when they can. The effort also lowers transportation costs, fuel and emissions. "You're able to fit more [of our] packages on a truck, so you don't have to move as many trucks across the country," explains Kontes.

Other workplace initiatives include the conversion of 74 percent of their forklift fleet to rechargeable electric models, online document sharing and single-stream recycling.

While Arc has already paved a green path for the industry, Tom Reed, vice president of Arc's human resources department, says they continue to look for more eco-friendly efficiencies. "[Sustainability] is a forever journey for us, but it's one we're excited about. We're working at it every day to get better," he says. "We have the structure in place from an organizational standpoint and the support from our business to continue doing that." ☐

# Safe and secure

## Security systems can provide peace of mind in home and office

By Erik J. Martin

ROBERT SICILIANO STILL shudders when thinking about that fateful night a few years back. He had retired to bed and enjoyed a peaceful slumber, but woke up the next morning to find his entire home had been ransacked—with most of his electronic equipment stolen.

"It scared the heck out of me that I slept through it," says Siciliano, a Boston-area Costco member. The next day he acquired a home security system. "I've had an alarm put in every house and business office I've occupied since."

Jeanne Bakelar was luckier. Before drifting off to sleep one evening last summer, she thought she heard footsteps inside her condo. While it proved to be nothing, Bakelar realized that as a single woman she needed a better level of protection against potential break-ins. Before long, her home was equipped with a

state-of-the-art security system, including a video camera.

"Now, when I'm away, I can go on my iPhone and I have the ability to peek inside my home," says Bakelar, a 10-year Costco member from Phoenix.

### It can happen to you

Whether it's a simple siren triggered by the opening of a door or window or an elaborate network setup involving cameras, motion detectors and Z-Wave controllers that turn your lights on and off, implementing a security system in your home or small business is a smart move, says John D. Knox, president and chairman of the Electronic Security Association ([www.esaweb.org](http://www.esaweb.org)).

"Too many homeowners invest in a system *after* they've been burglarized," Knox



LOREX

says. "However, security systems tend to be much more effective in preventing loss when they are installed as a proactive safety measure. Security systems can also provide you with protection for some of the most important elements of your business, whether it's your employees, data or products."

### Layers of protection

Many homeowners in good neighborhoods might believe that "an unmonitored alarm system with an interior horn or siren is good enough," says security consultant Chris E. McGoey, the Los Angeles-based "Crime Doctor" ([www.crimedoc.com](http://www.crimedoc.com)).

However, experts recommend a layered approach to security, starting with the exterior—including a yard sign and appropriate exterior lighting. The next layer is the perimeter—securing entrances and key windows. The third layer is the interior—providing additional protection with motion sensors and glass-break detectors.

You can also opt to add features such as motion-activated cameras, closed-circuit television surveillance, alarm alerts via text and email, and automated and remote controlling of lighting, temperature and other functions.

For the most coverage, Knox suggests choosing a wireless system for your residence or office that is centrally monitored around-the-clock by a dedicated service that can quickly dispatch police to your site if the alarm is activated. In addition to providing a higher level of protection, a monitored system can also yield discounts on your homeowner's or business insurance policy.

### The Costco Connection

Costco members can find a selection of security systems, monitors, cameras, fire- and waterproof safes, vaults and more at Costco and on [Costco.com](http://Costco.com).

To get a home insurance quote with Costco's exclusive provider,

Ameriprise Auto & Home Insurance, call 1-888-404-5365 or go to [Costco.com](http://Costco.com) and search "protect."



## Key bells and whistles

A WORTHY SECURITY system for a home or business can consist of many components, including:

- Video cameras with Web/smartphone viewing and recording capabilities
- Smoke and carbon monoxide detectors linked to your system
- Panic buttons, alarm window screens, pressure mats, water detectors, shock sensors and strobe lights
- Control panel with at least one keypad
- High-decibel siren
- Window and door sensors
- Interior motion detectors
- Glass-break detectors
- 24/7 central monitoring by an outside service

### Cause for alarm

Think you can get by without a security system? Consider these facts provided by the FBI and the Electronic Security Association.

- In 2010, more than 2 million burglaries and nearly 370,000 robberies occurred in the U.S.—the equivalent of an intrusion every 15 seconds and a robbery every 1.4 minutes.
- Most burglaries happen between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m., when a home is most likely to be unoccupied.
- Burglary victims suffered an estimated \$4.6 billion in lost property in 2010; the average dollar loss per incident was \$2,119.
- Homes without alarm systems are three times more likely to be burglarized than those with one installed.
- Nine out of 10 convicted burglars said they wanted to avoid homes with alarm systems, and if they did encounter an alarm, they would abandon the break-in.—EJM

### Safety shopping

While prices will vary depending on your needs and the options you select, you can expect to pay from between \$100 and \$300 minimum for a basic alarm and sensor kit you set up yourself, to more than \$1,000 for a sophisticated system. If you are hesitant about setting it up yourself, some companies will install your equipment for a small fee, but may require a multiyear commitment to monthly monitoring, for which they typically charge at least \$30 a month.

Alarm dealers and monitoring-service providers usually include a free security assessment that analyzes your property's layout and vulnerabilities. Because these professionals know how and where to place preferred components for maximum effectiveness, even with a system purchased as a DIY, it's often best to get advice from the experts. ☐

*Costco member Erik J. Martin is a Chicago-area freelance writer.*

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## Brushing up on oral health

# A toothy subject

By Angela Pirisi

DENTISTS HAVE A lot to smile about these days. They're seeing fewer cavities in kids, and more adults are keeping their teeth for life.

As the aging population grows, however, it becomes a challenge to maintain a healthy mouth for longer. Unfortunately, one-third of adults age 65 years or older have untreated cavities and just over 40 percent have gum disease, reports the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Things such as receding gums and cracked or worn old fillings create opportunities for tooth decay.

Plus, older people often take multiple medications, some of which can decrease saliva. Saliva is vital for washing away food debris, neutralizing acid from plaque and keeping tooth and gum surfaces slippery wet so sugar and bacteria can't get a foothold.

Much like a car, a mouth can fall into disrepair with age, so it actually needs more maintenance over time, explains Dr. Richard Price, a spokesperson for the American Dental Association (ADA). Luckily, the options for taking care of your teeth and gums across your life span are numerous. In fact, says Price, "There are so many products that you need a Ph.D. these days just to navigate the oral hygiene aisle in stores." At the end of the day, though, common sense and diligence should prevail.

**Choose a soft-bristled brush.** "It should

sit comfortably in your hand and in your mouth—just as you'd choose flatware. If it's comfortable to use, you're going to use it more," says Price.

People with arthritis or other dexterity problems may benefit from using an electric toothbrush to remove plaque. Using soft bristles and brushing gently can also help to prevent sensitive teeth. A recent U.S. survey of nearly 800 adults found that one in eight people suffers from sensitive teeth. Causes included the dental enamel (the coating on the tooth) or the cementum (the tissue at the base of the tooth near the gum line) wearing away and exposing the root. Price says that people who do at-home whitening may develop sensitive teeth too, but temporarily.

**Stick with fluoride.** These days, toothpaste manufacturers make myriad claims for their products: fighting cavities, removing stains, preventing plaque buildup, freshening breath and whitening teeth. The most important thing is for your toothpaste to contain fluoride, says Price. "Fluoride helps to fortify, or remineralize, weakened tooth enamel and protect against tooth decay," he explains.

Also, check for the ADA Seal of Acceptance. Products with the ADA Seal say what they do and do what they say.

**Floss—period.** "You can't vacuum a house well without using attachments," says Price. That's what flossing does—it helps you get into all the tight corners and crevices to clean where a toothbrush can't reach.

The best kind of floss is whatever you like enough to keep using regularly. Some people prefer interdental cleaners and wooden dental picks, while those with tightly spaced teeth may need something that glides more easily. Pre-threaded flossers may be easier to maneuver



MEDIA BAKERY



### Tablet or smartphone?

Scan or click here for oral-health tips from the American Dental Association. (See page 5 for details.)

ver than wrapping floss around your fingers.

**Make mouthwash a maybe.** Mouth rinses can perform various functions, from freshening your breath to protecting your teeth and gums against plaque and cavities. But basically they fall into two categories: cosmetic and therapeutic. Do you need one?

Not necessarily, says Price. Mouth rinses finish off cleaning by rinsing out any missed food debris, but they shouldn't replace brushing or flossing. If you're using a mouth rinse to fight bad breath or tender gums on a regular basis, see your dentist about finding the underlying cause, often a disease.

**Chew sugarless gum.** It can stimulate saliva flow, which helps to remove some food particles after eating. A dry mouth is a gilded invitation to bacteria to come in and make themselves at home. Some kinds of gum contain xylitol, a natural sweetener that fights tooth decay. However, Price warns that if you're constantly chewing gum to tackle bad breath or suffering from a dry mouth, get it checked out.

The take-home message, he says, isn't sexy—it's simple, and the same thing dentists have been drilling into our heads for years: Brush twice a day with a fluoride toothpaste, floss daily, eat a balanced diet and see your dentist regularly. ☺

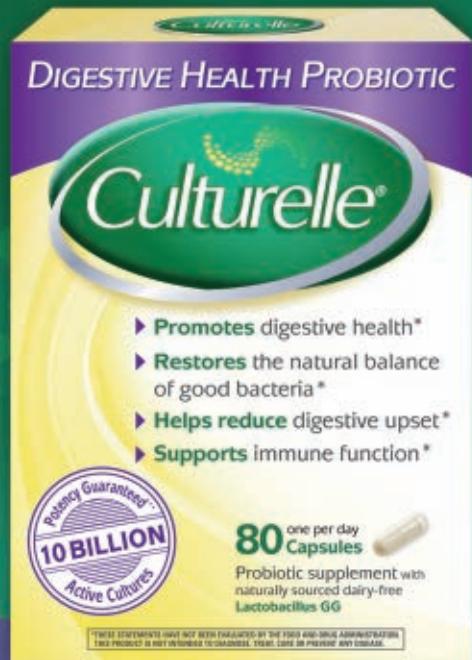
Angela Pirisi is a freelance writer who has been covering health topics for more than two decades.

### The Costco Connection

Costco members will find items to help keep their teeth and gums healthy, including manual and electronic toothbrushes, floss, toothpaste, mouthwash, sugarless gum—including Orbit, Extra or 5 in the new pantry pack—and more, at Costco and on Costco.com.

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## October Down Syndrome Awareness Month

**DOWN SYNDROME** is a genetic disorder that occurs when an individual has three copies of the 21st chromosome instead of the usual two copies. That additional genetic material alters development and causes the characteristics associated with Down syndrome.

Down syndrome is named after John Langdon Down, a British doctor who described the syndrome in 1866. About one in 691 children in the U.S. is born with Down syndrome, according to estimates from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The National Down Syndrome Society (NDSS) estimates that more than 400,000 people in the U.S. are living with the syndrome.

Most people with Down syndrome have several things in common.

- They are at risk for certain medical conditions, including congenital heart defects, respiratory and hearing problems, childhood leukemia and thyroid conditions.

- They exhibit common physical traits to varying degrees, including low muscle tone, small stature, an upward slant to the eyes and a single deep crease across the center of the palm.

- They experience mild to moderate cognitive delays, which are not indicative of the varied strengths and talents of each individual.

NDSS founded the Buddy Walk in 1995 to spread its mission of promoting the value, acceptance and inclusion of people with Down syndrome at the local level. This national program has grown from 17 Buddy Walks in 1995 to more than 250 expected this year. Last year, some 295,000 people participated, raising more than \$11.75 million to support local and national programs. Most Buddy Walks take place in or around October. Go to [www.ndss.org](http://www.ndss.org) to find an event near you.—David Wight

**Tablet or smartphone?**  
Scan or click here for a *My Great Story* video from NDSS about a special bond between two sisters.



## HEALTHY HEARING

# Now ear this!

Protecting yourself from hearing loss



IMAGEZOO

By Deano Kinsey

In our modern world, more and more of us are exposed to more and more noise. As this month is National Hearing Awareness Month, it is a good idea to stop and ask yourself: Am I at risk of losing some of my hearing?

Noisy jobs, concerts, gun ranges, nightclubs and even prolonged headphone use and car stereos at high volumes can slowly diminish and degrade the ability to hear. And it doesn't come back.

Once people lose enough hearing, it can negatively affect their ability to feel connected in many conversations and social situations, as the ability to understand sounds and speech is adversely affected. As hearing loss worsens, many people withdraw from activities that might reveal their problem and from situations that could cause them embarrassment.

Hearing loss can also make daily household life difficult and frustrating when just one member of the home can't hear very well. In my work as a hearing-instrument specialist, I constantly hear spouses and family members saying things like "He answers as if he didn't hear the question very well," or "She acts like she completely understands what we said, but later we learn she didn't have a clue."

When a person can't hear very well, pro-



Deano Kinsey

viding the wrong answers to questions and odd responses in conversations becomes more and more problematic. Often a pivotal moment occurs, and the person may seek help as the problem simply becomes too big to ignore anymore.

Look for these clues to hearing loss:

- Television at elevated volume levels
- Constant need to repeat or say things louder
- Frequent misunderstandings in conversation
- Stress/anger over poor communication

According to the National Institutes of Health, roughly 36 million people in the U.S. have a hearing loss. If you or someone you care about has a hearing loss, and it is affecting quality of life, keep these important things in mind:

- Learn what you can about hearing loss and hearing aids.
- Get tested by a hearing professional.
- Talk to successful hearing aid wearers.

Don't wait to get part of your life back. ☺

*Deano Kinsey is a Costco hearing instrument specialist at the Vacaville, California, location and the author of the hearing self-help book Stick It In Your Ear (not available at Costco). Costco has hearing centers at most U.S. locations. Check Costco.com for locations.*

## Don't take arthritis lying down

YEARS AGO, RHEUMATOID arthritis was considered a signal to slow down. However, research now shows the traditional recommendation of bed rest and drug therapy isn't the only—or even the best—solution.

### Should arthritis patients exercise?

Exercise is critical in arthritis management. It helps maintain strong and healthy muscles, joint mobility, flexibility and endurance. It also helps control weight.

Rest, on the other hand, helps to decrease active joint inflammation, pain and fatigue.

Arthritis patients need a good balance between the two: rest during the active phase of arthritis, and exercise during remission.

To find out how much rest is best during flare-ups, or if you experience unusual or persistent fatigue, increased weakness, a decrease in range of motion, an increase in joint swell-

ing or pain that lasts more than one hour after exercising, talk to your healthcare provider.

### Exercises for patients with arthritis

- Activities such as stretching and dancing can help maintain normal joint movement and increase joint flexibility. Perform such activities every day, or every other day.

- Weight lifting can help support and protect the joints affected by arthritis. Unless pain or swelling occurs and is severe, perform such exercises every other day.

- Walking, swimming or riding a bike can help improve your cardiovascular system while toning your muscles and controlling your weight. Exercise 20 to 30 minutes three times a week unless pain and swelling are severe. ☺

*Information provided by the American Chiropractic Association.*



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\*IMS Health, IMS NDTI, [12/2009 – 12/2011]. Children's TYLENOL® is the #1 recommended brand. Children's MOTRIN® is the #1 recommended brand of ibuprofen.

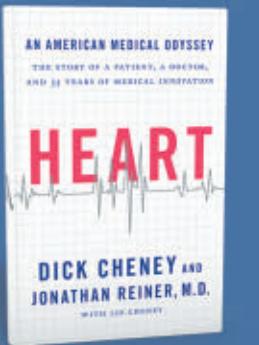
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## NEW FROM FORMER VICE PRESIDENT DICK CHENEY

Dick Cheney and his longtime cardiologist Dr. Jonathan Reiner, chronicle his 35-year battle with heart disease, providing insight into the medical breakthroughs that have changed cardiac care for patients around the world.

hardcover • nonfiction • on sale October 22  
Scribner • item #806596

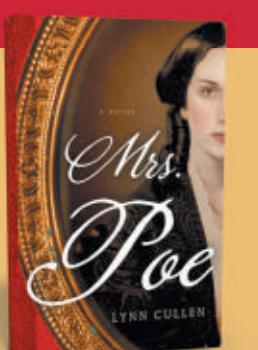


## PENNIE'S PICK!

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**"Mrs. Poe had my heart racing.... Don't miss it!"**

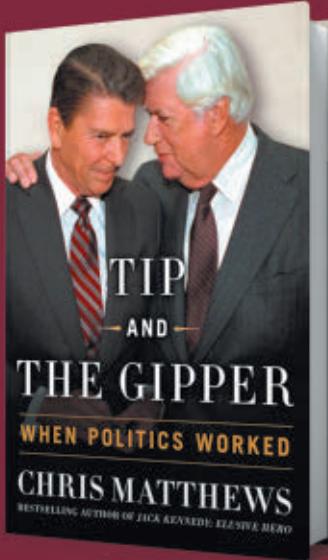
—SARA GRUEN, author of *Water for Elephants*



hardcover • fiction  
on sale October 1  
Gallery Books • item #806621

## NEW FROM CHRIS MATTHEWS, NEW YORK TIMES BEST-SELLING AUTHOR OF JACK KENNEDY: ELUSIVE HERO

Tip O'Neill's former chief of staff offers a firsthand, one-of-a-kind story of the friendship between President Reagan and the Speaker of the House.



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item #805554

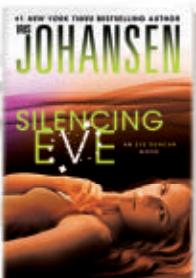
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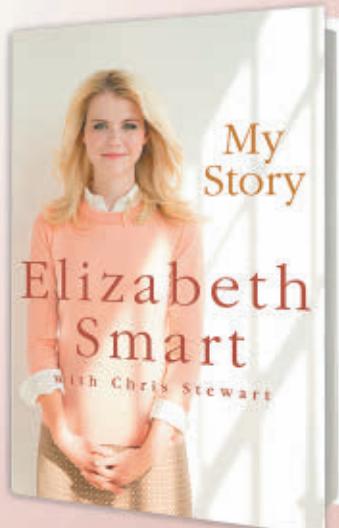


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**Tablet or smartphone?**  
Scan or click here to watch Anne Hillerman talk about her decision to continue her father's stories. (See page 5 for scanning details.)



# Passing the torch

By J. Rentilly

FAMILY DINNERS in the Tony Hillerman household enjoyed frequent visits from fictional creations: Navajo crime-solvers Joe Leaphorn and Jim Chee, featured in *The Blessing Way* and 17 more of the late best-selling author's New Mexico-set mystery novels. This left an indelible impression on the writer's eldest child, Anne.

"We'd be at dinner when I was growing up and, inevitably, Dad would share with us about the novel he was working on," recalls Anne Hillerman. "It was like Leaphorn and Chee were at dinner with us every night, enjoying with us the puzzles of life. They were kind of like my uncles."

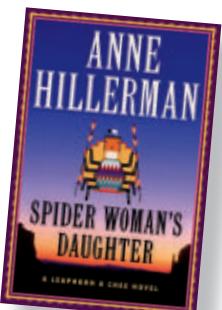
When Tony Hillerman passed away in 2008 after a long illness, he left in his wake not only a grieving family but a vast array of ques-

## Anne Hillerman continues her father's legacy

tions about the future of his characters, loved by millions of readers around the world. "After I processed the sadness of losing my father, I began to think, 'Gee, I'm going to miss these stories too,'" says Hillerman. "What's going to happen to these characters? What will they do next? They can't just stop existing, can they? All of those things were rattling around in my brain, and I figured for Dad's readers too."

Hillerman had already carved out a formidable career of her own as a writer, working as a reporter and editor for a variety of local and national news outlets and penning eight nonfiction books, including the acclaimed *Tony Hillerman's Landscape: On the Road with Chee and Leaphorn*. "I always felt very connected to my father as a writer. I was so in awe of him," she says. "I remember sneaking out of bed at night and watching him write in his home office when I was supposed to be sleeping, and he was always so supportive of my writing."

While promoting *Landscape*, a collaboration with her husband, the noted photographer Don Strel, Hillerman was approached by Santa Fe tour company Road Scholar about creating a Leaphorn-and-Chee-inspired tour



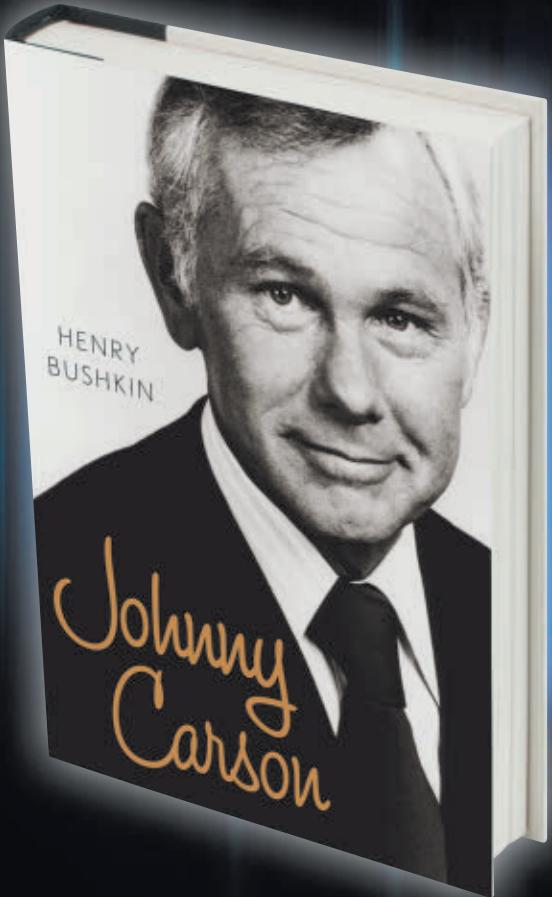
### The Costco Connection

Anne Hillerman's *Spider Woman's Daughter* is available in most Costco warehouses.

a waitress. I'm just hoping fans of my father's books will find enough to love in my version of these characters and that I'll give them some pleasure." [H]

J. Rentilly is a Los Angeles-based writer.

# A REVEALING LOOK AT THE REAL KING OF LATE NIGHT

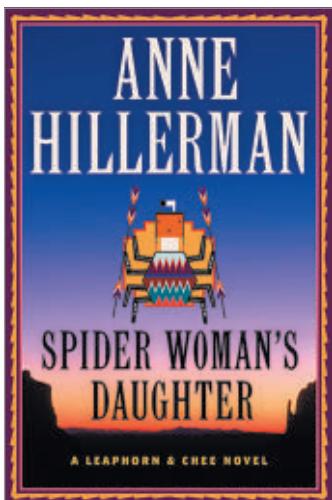


For 30 years Johnny Carson hosted *The Tonight Show* and had his finger on the pulse of the country. He was as notoriously inscrutable off camera as he was charming onstage.

Carson's longtime lawyer, best friend and wingman, Henry Bushkin, was with him every step of the way. Now, in his compelling new memoir, Bushkin shows us the Johnny Carson that nobody else could—a remarkably nuanced portrait of the *Tonight Show* host.

**Johnny Carson** unveils the man behind the desk as well as the star-studded world that he ruled.

Houghton Mifflin Harcourt | hardcover | biography | on sale October 15 | Item #805480



## A new Navajo Country mystery

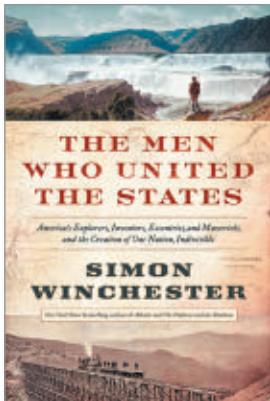
Navajo Sergeant Jim Chee discovers that a cold case involving his former boss and partner, retired Inspector Joe Leaphorn, may hold the key to a cold-blooded killer. Tony Hillerman's daughter, Anne, continues his popular Leaphorn and Chee series with *Spider Woman's Daughter*.

Harper | hardcover | fiction | on sale October 1  
Item #805538

## How the most powerful nation on Earth came together

Best-selling historical author Simon Winchester presents his first book about America, introducing the fascinating people who played a crucial role in creating the country. *The Men Who United the States* is a fascinating look at the brave individuals who toiled fearlessly to bond the citizenry and the geography of the USA from its very beginnings.

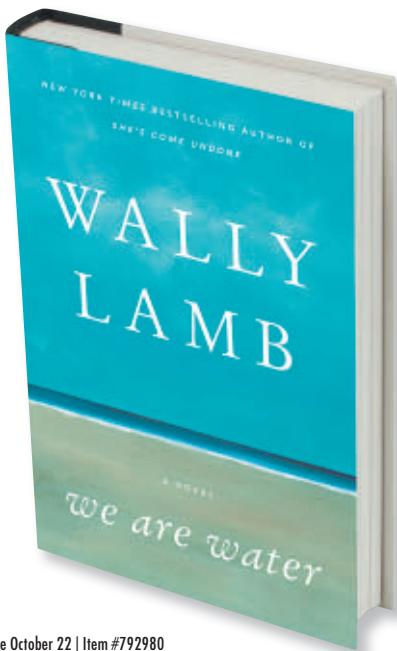
Harper | hardcover | nonfiction | on sale October 15 | Item #805492



## New from the New York Times best-selling author of *She's Come Undone* and *I Know This Much is True*

After 27 years of marriage and three children, Anna Oh falls in love with Viveca—a wealthy Manhattan art dealer. Their happiness is short-lived, however, as their plans to wed expose a lifetime of toxic secrets and truths that have festered just below the surface of the Ohs' lives. *We Are Water* is a layered portrait of marriage, family and a need for connection—brilliantly captured by Wally Lamb.

Harper | hardcover | fiction | on sale October 22 | Item #792980



 HarperCollinsPublishers

# Beyond Poe

## Author takes on the writer, his relations

By Mia Geiger

AUTHOR LYNN CULLEN grew up traveling, an annual summer tradition instigated by her father.

"He loved to travel, so every year, for three weeks, we would camp and we'd go all across the U.S., and every time he insisted on hitting historical sites," Cullen says from her home outside Atlanta. "I've been to every pioneer site this side of the Mississippi, every log cabin, every pioneer reenactment. He just instilled in us the love of history by taking us to real places, and I've always looked for the real places ever since."

Her continued wanderlust and the search for real places have taken her to Spain, the Netherlands and Belgium to dig up details that helped bring her novels *Reign of Madness*, *The Creation of Eve* and *I Am Rembrandt's Daughter* to life.

Her newest book, *Mrs. Poe*, took her to New York City to visit the haunts of Edgar Allan Poe. With insight gleaned from visiting Poe's cottage, Trinity Church and other sites, Cullen wove a story around Poe; his wife, Virginia; and Frances Osgood, a married poet. While the tale incorporates facts about the three characters and the culture of New York in 1845, it's an imagined scenario of Poe's life and the women in it.

"Americans know Poe through school. Everyone knows 'The Raven'; it's part of our culture," Cullen tells *The Connection*. "But oddly, the real man is different than what we think. He's not the crazy guy everyone thinks. The real Poe that I discovered was a very hardworking man."



Lynn Cullen

MEGAN CULLEN CAYES

Writing about Osgood gave Cullen an opportunity to focus on a favorite theme: strong women who overcome obstacles. In this book, she says, "I'm trying to reach out about what it's like to be a woman, what it's like to be a woman who has to support herself and her family, and what it's like to be a writer who is struggling to make it."

The Indiana native says research is "juicy fun, but at the heart I'm a novelist and really care about my characters the most. [I care] about saying something about the human condition. I'm not writing a fictionalized bio; I'm trying to say something about what it's like to be a person."

Although she'd had an interest in writing since the age of 6, it took Cullen a while to become a writer. After high school, she began an English program at Indiana University, but soon switched to part-time studies and full-time work as a secretary until she could figure out the kind of writing she wanted to pursue.

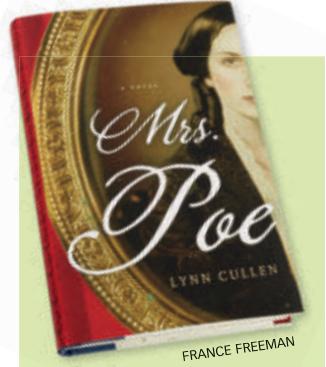
Along the way, she got married and had three daughters in four years. While her focus shifted to her girls, she continued her education as a part-time student. While volunteering in her oldest daughter's school library, she fell in love with books by Penelope Lively, Madeleine L'Engle and E.L. Konigsburg and decided she wanted to write children's books.

After graduating with a B.A. in English in 1986, and earning a teaching certificate in 1991, she gave herself 12 months to get a book contract or she would teach full time. She got the contract for her first book, *The Backyard Ghost*, in January 1992. It was published in 1993 and followed by 11 more children's books.

In 2007, her young-adult historical novel *I Am Rembrandt's Daughter* hit the shelves. Finding her niche in historical fiction, she began writing books for adults, which allowed her to explore more adult themes within the genre.

It's a career that suits the curious and studious author, who writes from the back porch of her ranch-style home. Usually her rescued German shepherd, Rosie, and her two cats compete for attention.

Next Cullen will tackle a historical novel featuring Mark Twain. It's sure to require a new fact-finding trip. And Cullen will once again be on a journey to educate and entertain. ☐



FRANCE FREEMAN

I REMEMBER reading Edgar Allan Poe in school. It was the first time I found words simultaneously lovely and scary. I also read about Poe's young bride, Virginia, and his mysterious death, but it took until this year to learn about Frances Osgood, a poet and friend of Poe. Their relationship is the heart of this month's book buyer's pick, Lynn Cullen's *Mrs. Poe*.

In an enchanting work of literary fiction, Cullen shares her interpretation of Poe's and Osgood's friendship. Historians tend to agree that Virginia approved of the relationship, but Cullen's vision reveals a plot nearly as twisted and dark as one of Poe's stories.

And, I hope you'll take a moment to notice the book's end papers. They include a quote from the poem "The Raven" and show a beautiful drawing of a young New York City.

**For more book picks, see page 67.**



Pennie Clark Ianniciello,  
Costco book buyer

FRANCE FREEMAN

**signed book giveaway**

COSTCO HAS 50 SIGNED COPIES of Lynn Cullen's *Mrs. Poe* to give away. To enter, go to Costco.com, search for "OctBookPick" and follow the instructions. Or print your name, address and daytime phone number on a postcard or letter and send it to: Lynn Cullen, *The Costco Connection*, P.O. Box 34088, Seattle, WA 98124-1088.

**NO PURCHASE, PAYMENT OR OPT-IN OF ANY KIND IS NECESSARY TO ENTER OR WIN THIS SWEEPSTAKES.**

Purchase will not improve odds of winning. Sweepstakes is sponsored by Simon & Schuster, 1230 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10020. Open to legal residents of the U.S. (except Puerto Rico) who are age 18 or older at the time of entry. One entry per household. Entries must be received by November 1, 2013. Winners will be randomly selected and notified by mail on or before December 1, 2013. The value of the prize is \$26. Void where prohibited. Winners are responsible for all applicable federal, state and local taxes. Odds of winning depend on the number of eligible entries received. Employees of Costco or Simon & Schuster and their families are not eligible.

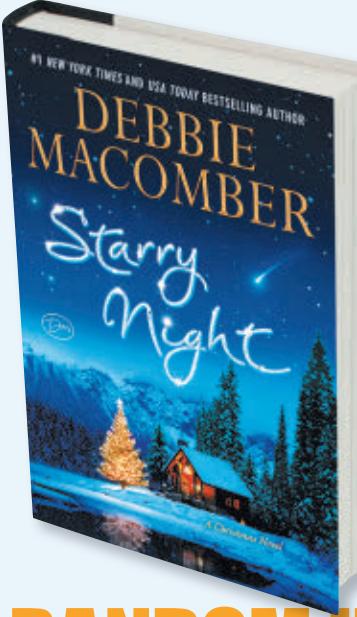


**Tablet or smartphone?**

Scan or click here to enter the giveaway in our digital newsstand and online editions. (See page 5.)

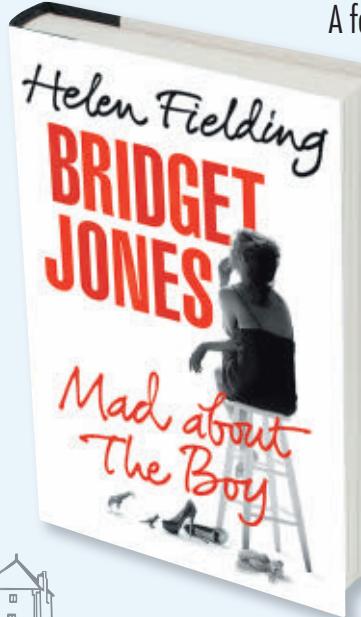
*Mia Geiger is a freelance writer in the Philadelphia area.*

'Tis the season for romance



Carrie Slayton is a society-page columnist who longs to write more-serious stories for her paper. So her editor offers her a challenge—score an interview with the notoriously reclusive author Finn Dalton. As the holidays approach, Carrie forsakes her family celebrations to brave the Alaskan wilderness, where she must choose between the story of a lifetime and following her heart.

**Ballantine Books | hardcover | fiction | on sale October 8 | Item #805542**



A favorite character returns!

In the hotly anticipated third installment of Fielding's Bridget Jones series, Bridget stumbles through the challenges of loss, single-motherhood, tweeting, texting, technology and rediscovering her sexuality in—warning: bad, outdated phrase approaching!—middle age. *Bridget Jones: Mad About the Boy* is timely, tender, touching, page-turning, witty, wise, outrageous and bloody hilarious.

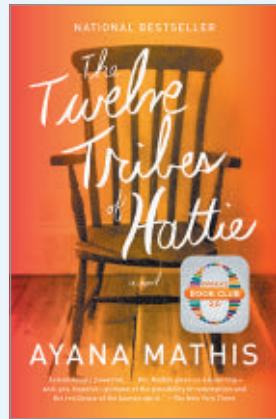
**Knopf | hardcover | fiction | on sale October 15 | Item #805490**

## RANDOM HOUSE HAS THE VERY BEST PAGE TURNERS

### Unforgettable stories

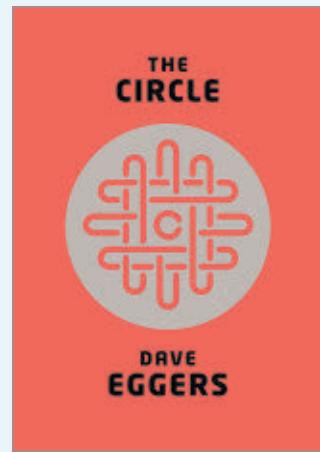
*The Twelve Tribes of Hattie* tells the story of a mother's monumental courage and is the newest Oprah's Book Club 2.0 selection. Also look for *Bertie Plays the Blues*, a new arrival from the charming Alexander McCall Smith. And coming to theaters soon—*The Counselor* featuring Brad Pitt, and Leonardo DiCaprio in *Wolf of Wall Street*. Read the novels before you see the movies.

**Vintage Anchor | paperback | fiction | on sale October 8 | Item #806632**



From Dave Eggers, an electrifying book about our transparent new world

What begins as the captivating story of one woman's arrival at the most influential company in the world soon becomes a heart-racing novel of suspense, raising questions about memory, history, privacy and even democracy. *The Circle* is a book people will be talking about for years to come.



**Knopf | hardcover | fiction | on sale October 8 | Item #806594**

### Love lasts long past death

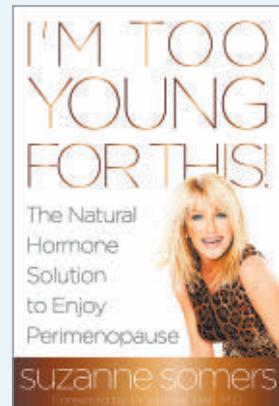
Two brothers are separated by belief but bound by tragedy. And nothing is stronger than the bond of family. Pulitzer Prize-winning author Jhumpa Lahiri's *The Lowland* is a sweeping family story from an author at the very height of her considerable powers.

**Knopf | hardcover | fiction | on sale September 24 | Item #806592**

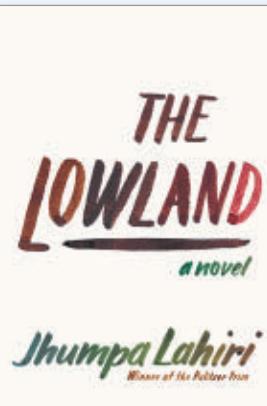
### Don't wait to feel good again

Actress and best-selling author Suzanne Somers has good news for women who are tired of being at the mercy of their hormones. In her latest, *I'm Too Young for This!*, she shows how to take control safely and without drugs. Life is about to change for the better!

**Crown Archetype | hardcover | nonfiction | on sale September 24 | Item #805332**

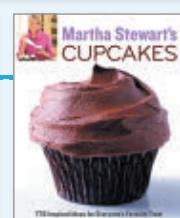
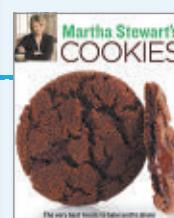
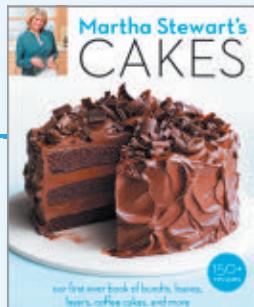


**suzanne somers**



### No one bakes like Martha

Find the perfect recipe for every occasion—whether no-fuss or fancy. Everyone loves a sweet treat. *Martha Stewart's Cakes* is a feast for the eyes and the palate, with ideas for baking, decorating and celebrating. Baking is low-stress when it's done the Martha Stewart way.



**Clarkson Potter | paperback | cookbook | on sale September 24 | Item #805576**



# TIMMY FAILURE = BIG SUCCESS

**By Stephanie E. Ponder**

IN THE LATE 2000s, newspapers closed up shop at an unprecedented rate. The trend alarmed not only journalists, but also everyone who supplies material for the funny pages. Stephan Pastis, the lawyer-turned-cartoonist behind the comic strip *Pearls Before Swine*, channeled his career uncertainty into a book for young readers: *Timmy Failure: Mistakes Were Made*.

Timmy is the young founder and CEO of the detective agency Total Failure, Inc. He happens to have a “pet” polar bear, Total, who is also his partner. The book begins with Timmy and Total having driven a car into a living room. What follows is the telling of the events—ahem, mistakes—that led to the crash.

*The Connection* caught up with Pastis in New York City, where he talked about his book and his comic strip.

**Costco Connection:** In a 2008 interview you said that newspapers were going away. Was writing a book something you had in mind to counteract job insecurity?

**Stephan Pastis:** When that slide started, [cartoonists] didn’t know where it would end. That was a scary time. I made an e-book for *Pearls*, did *Timmy*, wrote a screenplay. What’s cool is that, out of that necessity, I found things I enjoyed as much [as], if not more than, the strip. Writing *Timmy* is the funnest [sic] eight weeks of the year. I look forward to him.

**CC:** Timmy is a little obtuse, yet his heart is in the right place. Tell me a little about his character development.

**SP:** I worked from the premise that I wanted a character with a huge blind spot, because I always find that funny—somebody who thinks they’re one thing and then in reality they’re something else. And then make those two things as far apart as you can get. Everything else just flowed from watching what happened when I wrote it. If he was also humble, he could be kind of sad. But he’s clueless as to how dumb he is. He thinks he’s pretty great [and] doesn’t

feel sorry for himself. And that just made him more compelling. And then [there are] the other quirks, like when he speaks and insults people it’s often from the 19th century.

**CC:** Will Timmy age?

**SP:** I’ve never said his age. That’s a [*Diary of a Wimpy Kid* author] Jeff Kinney thing. He came over and said don’t put a grade or age, or otherwise you have to explain why he hasn’t moved to the next grade. So I took that to heart.

**CC:** Did you have your two children, Thomas, 15, and Julia, 11, read *Timmy*?

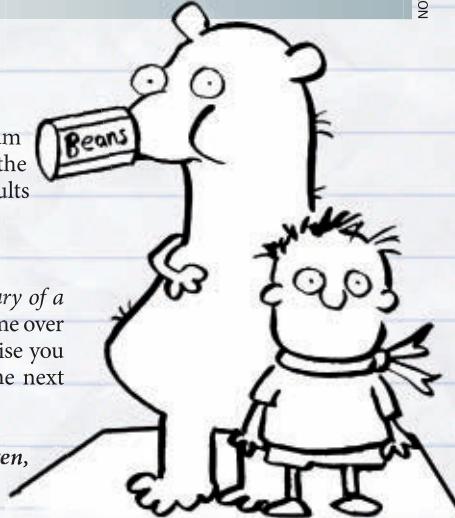
**SP:** I not only had them read the book, I had them read the book with me in the room. That is so annoying for them. I’d listen for if they’d laugh, and go, “What part was that? Why did you laugh?” If they didn’t laugh, I’d go, “What section are you in? You didn’t think that was funny? That was pretty funny.” It was really annoying; you don’t want to be my kid.

**CC:** The second Timmy book is scheduled for release in February, with a third in the works. How many will you write?

**SP:** That’s a good question. I guess until I don’t find it fun. That’s how I do everything. I’m always just trying to entertain myself, and hopefully other people are entertained. When I write, either books or *Pearls*, if it’s going well it feels like I’m watching, and it’s exciting to be the first person to see what [Timmy] does.

**CC:** *Pearls Before Swine* was first published in 2000. Do you see doing it indefinitely?

**SP:** Retirement is not in sight. Fifteen years is a good run. Twenty years is a good run. I could not do what *Peanuts* did or what *Doonesbury* does—unless I had to. Sometimes you go through weeks where you don’t know how bad you are. Sometimes you go through weeks where you don’t know how good you are. You have no short-term perspective; long term is crystal clear. As flippant as I am about it ... I have to make it good.



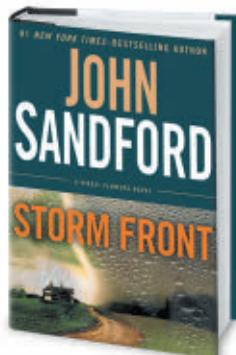
Tablet or smartphone?

Scan or click here for a *Timmy Failure* book trailer. (See page 5 for scanning details.)



## The Costco Connection

*Timmy Failure: Mistakes Were Made* is available in most Costco warehouses.

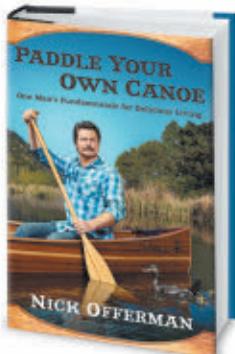


The new novel in the #1 *New York Times*-best-selling series. Virgil Flowers and an Israeli cop are looking for a missing relic. As it turns out, they aren't the only ones searching for it—a sinister group of men is also on the hunt, and they're willing to do anything to get it.

**Putnam** | hardcover | fiction | on sale October 8 | item #805550

From the #1 *New York Times*-best-selling author of *Eat, Pray, Love* and *Committed*—an enthralling novel of desire and discovery. “Gilbert is consistently entertaining and illuminating.” —Curtis Sittenfeld

**Viking** | hardcover | fiction | on sale October 1 | item #805498

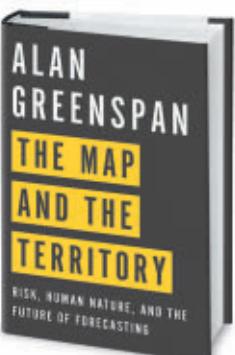


Parks and Recreation actor Nick Offerman shares his humorous fulminations on life, manliness, meat and much more in his first book. “Thought-provoking, profane, and frequently hilarious.” —*Publishers Weekly*

**Dutton** | hardcover | nonfiction | on sale October 1 | item #805494

The latest in the *New York Times*-best-selling Stone Barrington series. When Stone embarks on a trip to Bel-Air, he expects a relaxing break. But trouble never takes a vacation, and it has a way of finding Stone.

**Putnam** | hardcover | fiction | on sale October 8 | item #805474

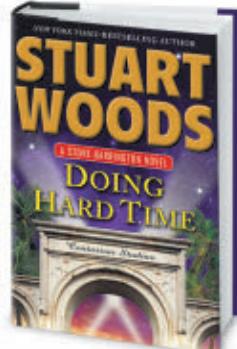


Alan Greenspan explores the limits and possibilities of economic forecasting and risk management, analyzing the recent financial crisis and drawing from history and behavioral economics to build a better model for the future.

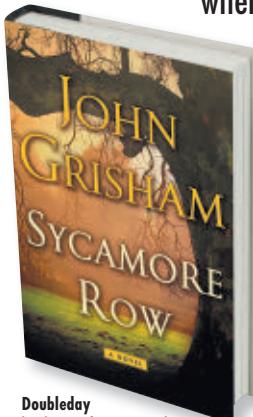
**The Penguin Press** | hardcover | nonfiction | on sale October 22 | item #806584

#1 *New York Times*-best-selling author Elizabeth George delivers another masterpiece of suspense in her Inspector Lynley series: a gripping child-in-danger story that tests Detective Sergeant Barbara Havers as never before.

**Dutton** | hardcover | fiction | on sale October 15 | item #805484



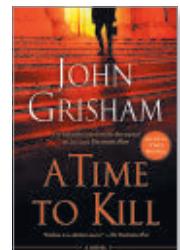
John Grisham takes you back to where it all began.



**Doubleday** | hardcover | fiction | on sale October 22 | item #805533

*A Time to Kill* is one of the most popular novels of our time. Now the author returns to that famous courthouse in Clanton, MS, as Jake Brigance finds himself involved in another deeply controversial trial. This time a wealthy man's second

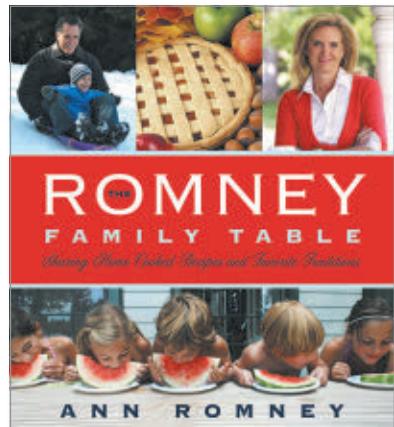
will, handwritten right before he killed himself, leaves nearly all of his fortune to his black maid. Old racial tensions resurface when Grisham goes back to the setting and characters that established him as America's favorite storyteller nearly 25 years ago. Pick up *Sycamore Row* and other Grisham titles at Costco.



**Bantam** | paperback | fiction | on sale September 24 | item #805560

Home is where good things happen.

For the Romney family, the heart of the home is the kitchen. Pull up a chair as Ann Romney invites you into her home and kitchen, combining some of her favorite foods with memories of raising five boys (such as coming home to find one young son completely covered in Marshmallow Fluff). Part insider look, part cookbook, *The Romney Family Table* offers an irresistible blend of personal reflections, family photos, homegrown traditions and more than 130 mouthwatering recipes that have bound a family together through the generations.



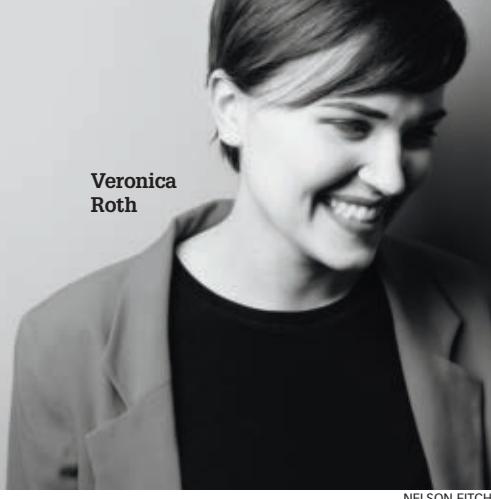
**Shadow Mountain** | hardcover | cookbook | on sale October 1 | item #802739



WAREHOUSE ONLY

Because What You Read Matters.

Veronica  
Roth



NELSON FITCH

**By Fran R. Schumer**

VERONICA ROTH, THEN 21 and a senior at Northwestern University, was standing next to the trash bin in her apartment building when her literary agent told her news that would change her life. Not only did the editors at HarperCollins want to publish her first novel, but they liked it so much that they were making a preemptive offer—that is, an offer too good to refuse.

Three years later, Roth is mentioned in the same breath as J.K. Rowling, Stephenie Meyer and, most of all, Suzanne Collins. Like Collins' *The Hunger Games*, Roth's *Divergent* trilogy is classified as "dystopian" because it is set in a future that is grim. Roth's first two books, *Divergent* and *Insurgent*, both occupied the No. 1 position on the *New York Times* best-seller list and together have sold more than 4 million copies. A movie adaptation of *Divergent*, starring Shailene Woodley (the older daughter in the movie *The Descendants*) and Theo James (Lady Mary's inconveniently dead lover in season one of *Downton Abbey*), is scheduled for release next March, and this month, on October 22, the final novel in the trilogy, *Allegiant*, will go on sale.

Roth, 25, who lives in Chicago with her husband, the photographer Nelson Fitch, is still reeling from the excitement. "It's been a little crazy," says Roth, who has been writing stories since she was "too old for playing pretend." Success, however, especially at her age, can be daunting. "The best aspect of it is having written something that connects me with so many readers, especially young readers

whom I love and care about," she says. The worst aspect of success is the terrific pressure it creates: "the fear of disappointing people once they start to believe in you," she explains. "With each subsequent book,



## The Costco Connection

Veronica Roth's *Allegiant* will be available in most Costco warehouses on October 22.

# The young and the dauntless

25-year-old novelist stares down major success

you worry, 'Oh no, are they going to hate this one? Will I let them down?' You feel this internal pressure not to disappoint people."

For those who have missed out on the *Divergent* trilogy craze, the stories take place in a futuristic Chicago in which people are stratified into five groups: Abnegation, Erudite, Candor, Amity and Dauntless. At 16, Beatrice (nickname: Tris), the plucky heroine, must make a choice: Should she remain in Abnegation, the group into which she was born and in which selflessness is the chief virtue, or should she join Dauntless, whose members view daring as the means to fight injustice. Given Roth's own real-life fears—"roller coasters, bugs of all kinds" and, more

recently, "being in front of an audience," which occurs a lot lately—it isn't surprising that she created a heroine whose choice demands valor. The ultimate lesson of *Dauntless*, both in literature and in life, Roth says, "is not about having no fear, but of trying not to let that fear determine your behavior."

What is in the utopian future for this dreamer of dystopian worlds? Roth's plan is to visit the set of the *Divergent* movie that is currently in production—"I want to enjoy that experience to the fullest"—and take time to "recover from this crazy, awesome ride."

Fran R. Schumer is a freelance writer living in New Jersey.

**Item #800750**

**Item #800751**

**Item #967835**

**Item #981181**

While supplies last.  
Distributed by Walt Disney Studios Home Entertainment, Burbank, CA 91521. © 2013 Disney

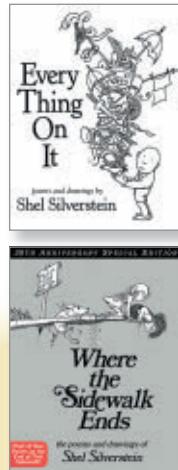
Selection varies by location.  
**WAREHOUSE ONLY**

## Read it before you see it!

Markus Zusak's extraordinary #1 *New York Times* best-seller will be in movie theaters this fall! *The Book Thief* is the unforgettable, award-winning novel that tells the inspirational story of a spirited and courageous young girl who transforms the lives of everyone around her when she is sent to live with a foster family in World War II Germany.



Random House | paperback | fiction | available mid-October | Item #80362  
©2013 Twentieth Century Fox



## Bend your brain and open your heart

Millions have grown up reading the works of Shel Silverstein. Now a whole new generation is sure to fall in love. *Every Thing on It* and *A Light in the Attic* are priceless collections of poems and drawings that promise to tickle the funny bone and baffle the brain. And find out where the Silverstein poetry collections began with the profound and hilarious *Where the Sidewalk Ends*, a must-have for fans of every age.

HarperCollins | hardcover | fiction | available mid-October | Item #704554

## Simplify your life

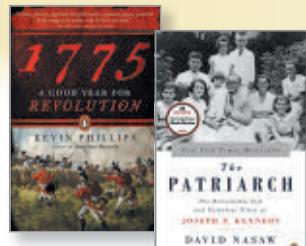
Make the very most of your gadgets, smartphones and tablet computers with international best-selling guides. Step-by-step instructions are easy to follow so anyone can become an expert. Packed with instant solutions and fully illustrated, these complete resources will allow users to supercharge productivity. Simple yet comprehensive instructions in *My Samsung Galaxy S 4* and *My iPhone* allow users to customize their phones to fit their needs. And customize features to get the most out of your tablet with *My iPad* and *My Kindle Fire HD*.



Que | hardcover | fiction | available now | Item #604753

## Compelling history

Celebrated historian David Nasaw examines the compelling life of Joe Kennedy, the father of the 20th century's most famous political dynasty, in the award-winning *The Patriarch*. And from the best-selling author of *American Dynasty*, comes a groundbreaking account of the American Revolution in *1775*.



Penguin | paperback | nonfiction | on sale September 24 | Item #806590

Books may not be available in all locations. All book jackets are subject to change. Political opinions expressed in books carried by Costco in no way reflect the opinions of Costco's management, buying staff or *The Costco Connection*.

## Make bedtime an adventure

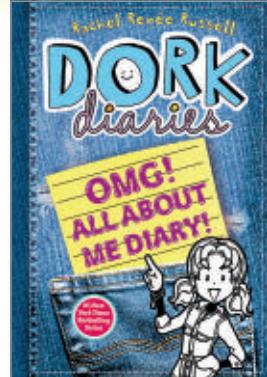
Interactive pop-up books come with a working flashlight that can be used to create shadows and sounds for each scene. Choose your Disney favorite... *Cars*, Mickey Mouse, Disney Princesses or Jake.



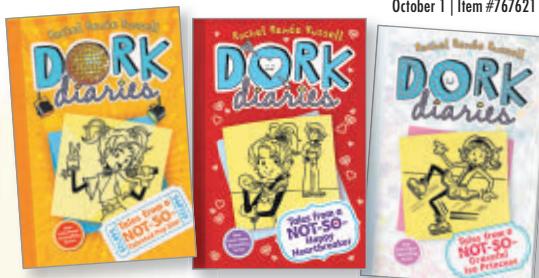
Publications International | box set | fiction | available mid-October | Item #779684

## Create your own Dork Diary

Nikki Maxwell is just a regular kid, struggling to fit in, and hopefully survive, middle school. *Dork Diaries* chronicles her ups and downs with crushes, frenemies, BFFs and more. And now fans can create their very own Dork Diary with the new *Dork Diaries: OMG! All About Me Diary!*—an interactive journal with questions to answer daily, art and quotes from Nikki. You can find the best of the *Dork Diaries* books at Costco!



Aladdin | hardcover | fiction | on sale October 1 | Item #767621

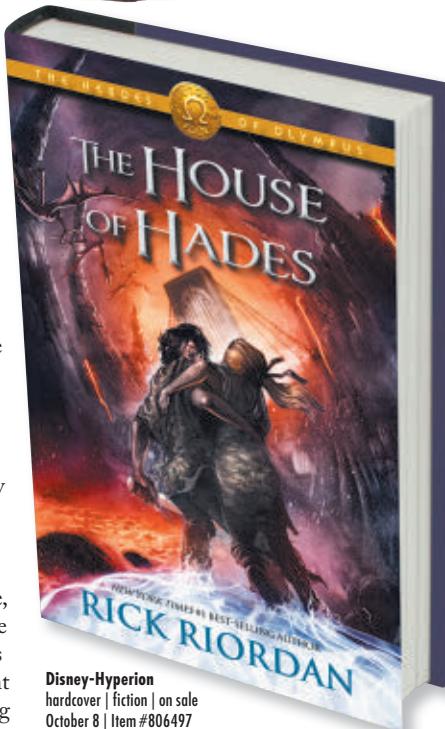


Aladdin  
hardcover |  
fiction |  
available now |  
Item #767621



## All Hades is about to break loose!

*House of Hades* is the exciting fourth installment of the *Heroes of Olympus* series. With Annabeth and Percy being separated from their companions, the five other demigods have to follow Percy's instructions to find the mortal side of the *Doors of Death*. If they can fight their way through the Gaea's forces, and Percy and Annabeth can survive, then the Seven will be able to seal the Doors both sides and prevent the giants from raising Gaea. The stakes are higher than ever in *The House of Hades*.



Disney-Hyperion  
hardcover | fiction | on sale October 8 | Item #806497

WAREHOUSE ONLY

# October Book buyers' picks

## FICTION

**The Good House**, by Ann Leary. This book does a great job of capturing the dynamics of life in a small town, while providing readers with an engaging story. Hildy, a successful grandmother whose daughters have accused her of drinking too much, befriends Rebecca, a wealthy young mother and newcomer to the town. Their evenings spent gosiping and sharing bottles of wine lead them from friendship to the brink of revealing dark secrets.

—Beth Alley, inventory control specialist, books

**Once We Were Brothers**, by Ronald H. Balson. Balson's novel does a heartbreaking job of showing how two people, who were as close as kin, can end up on different sides of a war. Elliot Rosenzweig, a respected civic leader and philanthropist, is accused of being a former Nazi SS officer named Otto Piatek, "the

butcher of Zamosc." Although the charges are denounced, his accuser, Ben Solomon, is convinced he is right. Ben persuades an attorney to take his case, revealing that the true Piatek was abandoned as a child and raised by Ben's family, only to betray them during the Nazi occupation. But has he accused the right man?

—Chris Burns  
inventory control specialist, books

**Ender's Game**, by Orson Scott Card. In order to develop a secure defense against an attack, government agencies breed child geniuses and train them as soldiers. After his siblings fail, Andrew "Ender" Wiggin is drafted into the orbiting Battle School for military training. His skills make him a leader in school and respected in the Battle Room, where children play at mock battles in zero gravity. Ender suffers greatly from isolation, rivalry from his

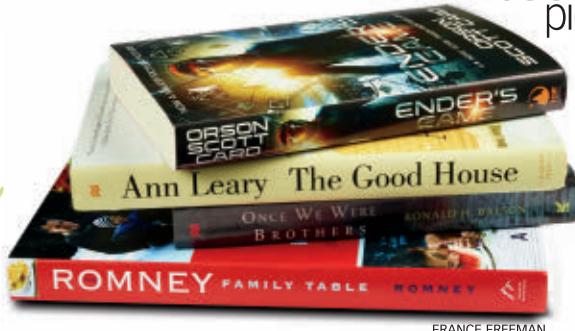
peers, pressure from the adult teachers and an unsettling fear of the alien invaders. Why not get ready for next month's big-screen version by reading the book?

—Scott Losse  
inventory control specialist, books

## NONFICTION

**The Romney Family Table**, by Ann Romney. For me, the kitchen is the heart of my home. In this cookbook, Romney shows that the same is true for her and her family. With a wife and mother's warmth and grace, Romney shares stories, traditions and more than 80 homegrown recipes. The book also features beautiful food photos along with family snapshots that span more than 40 years. This cookbook offers a glimpse into the Romneys' kitchen, as well as a look into their lives.

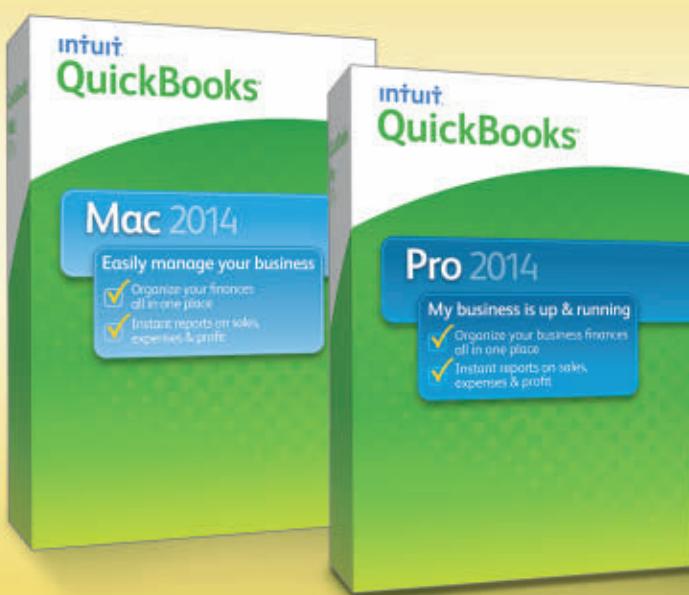
—Shana Lind-Stowers, assistant buyer, books



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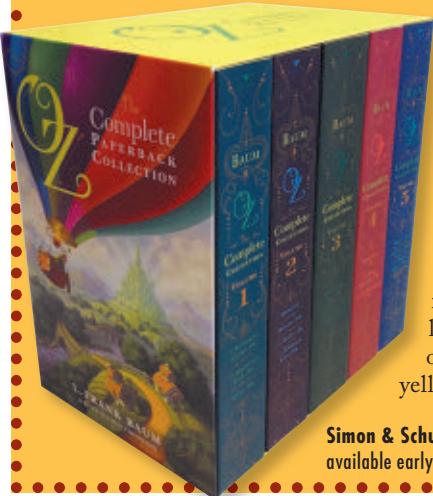
# Kids' Pick!

Lindsay Bubitz,  
assistant buyer, books

The beloved classic *The Wizard of Oz*, remains one of the most influential films in history. Now, as Warner Bros. celebrates the 75th anniversary of the iconic movie, Costco is pleased to offer members the definitive *Oz* collection in a beautiful box set. All of the colorful and enchanting characters come to life with this keepsake collection of 15 titles from L. Frank Baum's

original cherished American fairytale series. The lavishly packaged box set includes all of the beloved *Oz* tales in five paperback volumes. Longtime fans will treasure the collection and new fans will absolutely look forward to their own walk down the yellow brick road.

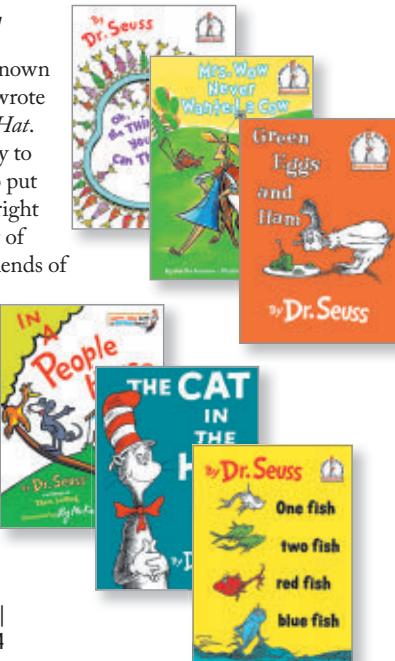
**Simon & Schuster** | box set | fiction | available early October | Item #806183



## The Beginner Book story

In 1957, Theodor Geisel—known to the world as Dr. Seuss—wrote a book called *The Cat in the Hat*. It was fun to read aloud, easy to read alone and impossible to put down. From this magically right beginning came the concept of Beginner Books, exacting blends of words and pictures that encourage children to read—all by themselves. Hailed by elementary educators and remedial-reading specialists, these enormously popular books are now used in schools and libraries throughout the English-speaking world.

**Random House** | hardcover | fiction | available mid-October | Item #803084



## Spark a child's creativity

Build vocabulary, develop language skills and more. Peek-a-boo flaps, slide-and-find doors, hidden words and pictures help kids learn. Choose from *Play and Learn 123*, *Play and Learn ABC* and the best-selling *Lift-the-Flap First 100 Words*.



**Priddy Books** | hardcover | fiction | available early October | Item #806164

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# Kids! books & more

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**Priddy Books** | box set | educational | available early October | Item #795359

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Sofia the First embarks on an aquatic adventure and meets a famous, finned member of the Disney family in the process. During a family vacation on a floating palace, Sofia befriends a mermaid named Ariel and two worlds come together in order for the girls to save the underwater kingdom.

Don't miss the new Disney Junior movie coming in November!



**Disney Press** | hardcover | fiction | on sale September 24 | Item #806510

## Halloween fun for little ones!

Just in time for Halloween, Create-A-Face Activity Pads allow little ones to get silly—building spooky, crazy or even funny faces with a giant variety of wacky, reusable stickers. Select your own combinations to come up with unique creations again and again.



**Dalmatian Press** | paperback | fiction | available now | Item #723431

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**Dalmatian Press** | paperback | fiction | available now | Item #787870

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**Tablet or smartphone?**

Scan or click here for a video about the real men and women who inspired *China Beach*. (See page 5 for instructions.)

**From bottom left, clockwise, are cast members Marg Helgenberger (red dress), Cherry White, Robert Picardo, Tim Ryan, Concetta Tomei, Brian Wimmer, Chloe Webb, and, in the center, Michael Boatman and Dana Delany.**

**By Nancy Mills**

BACK HOME, the Vietnam War wasn't really over until we'd seen it on TV—specifically on *China Beach*. The TV show, which aired on ABC from 1988–1991, served as a four-season elegy for the unwon conflict. In the show, everyone at the 510th Evacuation Hospital outside Da Nang showed grace under pressure while playing a vital part in the war effort.

As First Lieutenant Colleen McMurphy, Dana Delany was the heart of the series. "McMurphy reminded me of Henry Fonda or Clint Eastwood—the strong, silent hero," Delany, 57, says today. "She is probably the closest character to me that I've ever played. I do have a bit of the savior in me."

"While we were making it, we got letters from school kids saying, 'Thank you. Now I



WARNER BROTHERS

# Back to Vietnam

understand what my father went through."

"I think we helped give veterans and their families closure," adds Marg Helgenberger, 54, who played "entrepreneur" K.C. Kolowski. "McMurphy and I were good girl-bad girl, but we had each other's backs."

She too influenced her character's development. "I told the writers about my summer job in a Nebraska meat plant," she says, "and it became a core monologue in the episode that won me an Emmy Award. They incorporated my pregnancy into K.C.'s storyline because they couldn't really hide it. I was always wearing very little."

"*China Beach* showed a lot of women's stories, but it never seemed to me like a chick show," says Nancy Giles, 53, who played Private Frankie Bansen, who worked in the motor pool. "Instead, it made me see the human side. It broke down the tragedy and the human cost of people going into battle to kill each other."

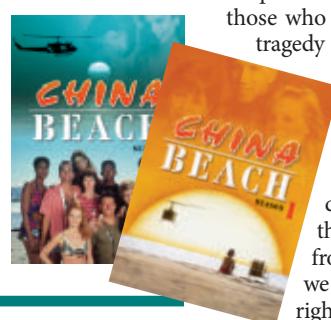
For research, co-creators John Sacret

## A visit with the cast of *China Beach*

Young and William Broyles Jr. organized weekend retreats where they introduced the cast to nurses, doctors and Red Cross and USO workers who had been in Vietnam.

"The interviews we did informed the show in no small way," Young says. "I had a cousin who was killed in Vietnam. Bill was a Vietnam vet and had written a book."

"Everybody was scared about doing something from the women's point of view, but the material was raw and fresh. The important question for us was: What happened to the lives of these young men and women?"



### The Costco Connection

The first two seasons of *China Beach* are available on DVD in all Costco warehouses.

To relieve the tension of working on such heavy material and to build camaraderie, the cast occasionally played practical jokes. Robert Picardo, 59, who played womanizing Dr. Dick Richard, remembers, "‘Dodger’ [Jeff Kober] is supposed to be having a heart attack on the operating table. I've cracked his chest and Dana pushes me out of the way to massage his heart."

"One of the assistant prop people had hidden under the gurney. When [she] reached into the chest of the artificial body, a hand grabbed her hand. Having just executed such an emotionally wrenching scene, it was great to see her burst into laughter."

Turning serious, Picardo adds, "*China Beach*'s biggest impact was changing our deeper understanding and appreciation of those who serve and sacrifice. The greatest tragedy of that war is that we blamed the soldiers, not the policy deciders."

"I heard that some of the men who served in Vietnam had trouble tuning the show in at first. It was too painful, and it didn't look like their war. But once they saw that the point of view was from those supporting their efforts, we got very high marks for getting it right."

Nancy Mills is a Los Angeles-based journalist who writes about film and TV.

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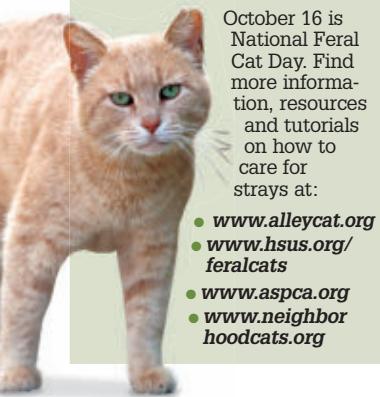


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# Don't fear the feral

Fixing and coexisting as an approach to the feral cat conundrum

## Feline friends



October 16 is National Feral Cat Day. Find more information, resources and tutorials on how to care for strays at:

- [www.alleycat.org](http://www.alleycat.org)
- [www.hsus.org/feralcats](http://www.hsus.org/feralcats)
- [www.aspca.org](http://www.aspca.org)
- [www.neighborhoodecats.org](http://www.neighborhoodecats.org)

**By Penny Musco**

ACCORDING TO MANY, we have a cat problem in the U.S. With population estimates in the tens of millions, ferals—felines who live their entire lives outdoors with little or no human contact—are everywhere. Which means that no matter where you live or work, chances are there's a colony nearby.

"People feed the cats, but then they call their local shelter for help, and the shelter doesn't know what to do except tell them to get a trap and bring them in," says Costco member Becky Robinson, president and co-founder of Alley Cat Allies (ACA). Once at a shelter, though, the cats are "not going to get adopted," Robinson continues. "Seventy percent of all cats taken to shelters are killed, and when it comes to feral cats, virtually 100 percent are."

It's not only an unpleasant way of dealing with them, but an ineffective one: "Euthanasia as a method of population control isn't cheap, easy or quick," notes Costco member Dr. Margaret Slater, senior director of veterinary epidemiology for the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA). Robinson cites the case of a large Midwestern county that spent \$185 per cat to eradicate ferals, numbering into the tens of thousands of dollars annually. "We're talking about a massive production line that ends the lives of healthy animals, that's cruel and inhumane and a total failure, [because] there are more cats than ever," she says.

## Advocates for TNR

That's why ACA, the ASPCA and other organizations, such as the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS), advocate trap-neuter-return (TNR), in which the animals are safely captured, sterilized and vaccinated, then returned to their colony. This stops breeding and limits the spread of diseases such as rabies—crucial for all cats, says Slater, since unneutered indoor pets may be allowed to roam.

TNR is also better for the cats: "It stabilizes the colony and they're not reproducing, so their health improves," Robinson concurs. And while kittens and a few adult felines may be socialized and brought inside, most cannot be. "Their home is outside," Robinson adds.

That's what bothers some who, although they may tolerate or even like animals, don't want them

CONTINUED ON PAGE 72



Trap-neuter-return programs have proven to be an effective approach to dealing with feral cats.

## FERAL CATS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 71

roaming around their lawns and using their gardens as litter boxes.

"[These people] may be upset because they see their neighbor feeding the cats and figure [because] the cats are there, the neighbor is to blame," explains Costco member Nancy Peterson, cat programs manager at HSUS. She regularly fields inquiries not only from people who want to help, but also from those who just want the cats gone, although usually not exterminated. ACA's research shows that 81 percent of Americans would prefer to let a stray cat live outside rather than have it caught and put down.

### Other options

Fortunately, there are a variety of products to deter cats from going where they're not wanted. Physical barriers such as fences and bushes hinder their movements; scent repellents as well as motion-activated sprinklers and sound devices harmlessly frighten them away. Protective covers keep paw prints (and dirt and leaves) off cars.

But the cost of items to mollify annoyed neighbors, as well as food and vet bills, adds up,

which is why, if you're thinking about managing feral cats by trapping them and having them sterilized, experts warn you'd better look before you leap.

"That's why I'm going to be working the rest of my life," jokes Kay in New Jersey, who buys nearly all her pet supplies at Costco, and who for 16 years has supported a group of ferals in her backyard. (She wishes to go by only her first name and state, because "I prefer people not to notice I'm caring for outdoor cats.") She practices TNR and hasn't seen a kitten in her neighborhood for a decade.

Caregivers also need to think long-term, she cautions, since "if you take care of them right, they're going to live full lives, and that means you have to commit 10 years to them, at least."

In addition to Kay, "there are thousands and thousands of caring people who are willing to trap-neuter-return feral cats, using their own money," says Peterson of the HSUS. ACA calculates anywhere from 1 million to 3 million people manage colonies; many of them belong to its Feral

Friends Network, a directory of individuals, clinics and even shelters (some funded by grants) that teach TNR, lend traps, offer advice and provide low- or no-cost sterilization.

### More on board

Becky Robinson is encouraged that more municipalities are embracing this nonlethal way of handling feral cats: ACA found that support for TNR has increased ten-fold since 2003. She and Slater both quote a saying commonly ascribed to Mahatma Gandhi: "A nation's progress can be judged by the way it treats its animals." ☐

*Costco member Penny J. Musco is a Chicago-based writer.*

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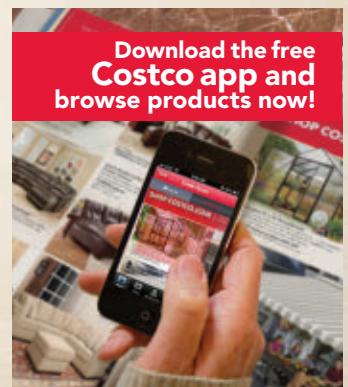
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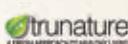
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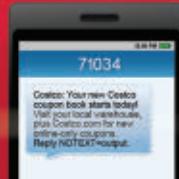
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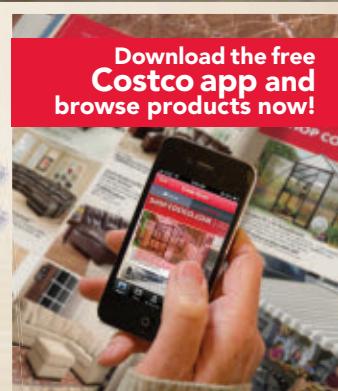


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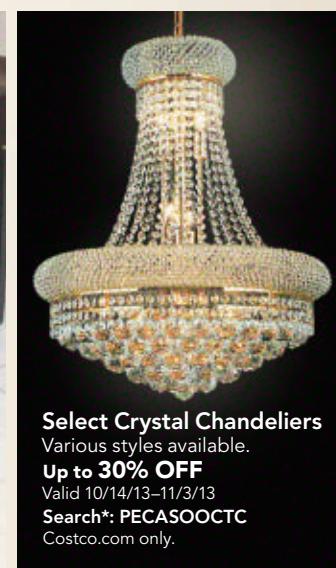


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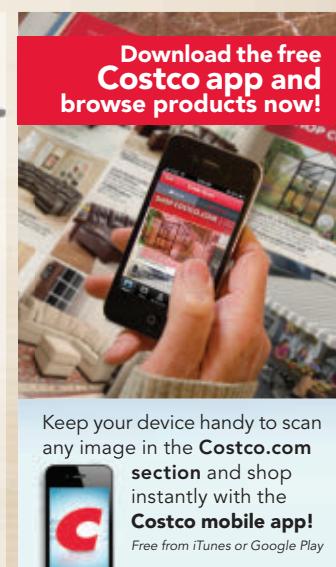


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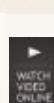
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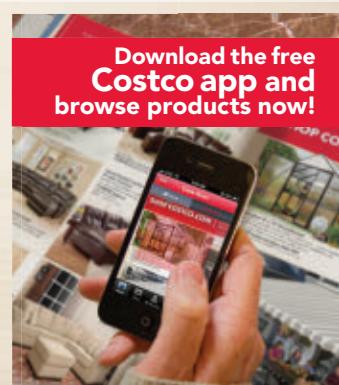
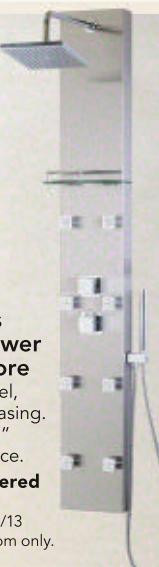
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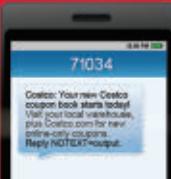
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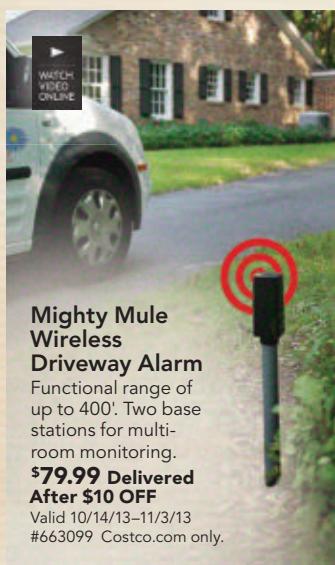
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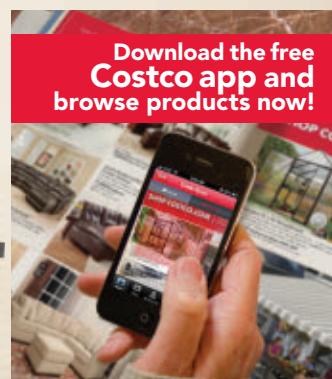
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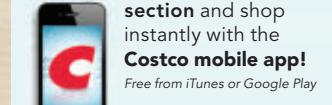
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# A time to heal

## Costco and employees unite to care for Boston bomb survivor Jeff Bauman

By Will Fifield

UP UNTIL LUNCHTIME, April 15, 2013, was just a normal Monday. As usual, I forced myself to go to a gym and tried to keep up with a friend. But in the middle of our workout, while I was trying to rub life back into my burning muscles, surreal images of bombs exploding in a crowd of spectators flashed on a nearby TV.

"What is this?" I asked, as the camera panned across what looked like war footage. I was confused, because moments earlier the TV had been on a sports channel. Then I noticed it said "Boston Marathon" off to the side.

My heart raced as cameras panned across bloody brick streets where victims lay struggling, many with severely damaged limbs. "Oh God, look at this," I said.

The trauma on the screen before us was all too familiar. As I watched, I was mentally whisked back to a horrible winter night in 1990. My brother Matt and I lay on the side of a desert road, bleeding profusely, internally and externally, as emergency medics worked to save our lives following a head-on car accident. I lost the lower half of my right leg, sustained more than a dozen broken bones and suffered third-degree burns on most of my back and a portion of the right side of my face as a result. This scene is where I wind up mentally every time I see trauma.

I normally don't watch news stations, but I was attentive as details of the Boston Marathon

bombings came to light. I felt sick for the people who lost loved ones, especially for the family of 8-year-old Martin Richard, and early on I learned that one of the survivors, Jeff Bauman, was a Costco employee. Bauman lost both of his legs above the knee.

### A mission of hope

As an amputee, I somehow wanted to bring hope to the survivors who had lost limbs and suffered physical trauma, and to Jeff especially, since we work for the same company. Immediately I thought of Byron Speer, a Costco employee who works at the Issaquah, Washington, warehouse, near Costco's headquarters, where I work. Byron is an inspiration. Though he lost both of his legs above the knee when a van struck him on the side of the road while he was securing a load in his pickup truck in 2003, he still works in the warehouse, and he's still an active dirt bike enthusiast. He is a can-do guy who tries to be self-sufficient, even to the point of growing as much food for his two sons and himself as he can at his 20-acre home in western Washington.

"We should take up a collection to send Byron Speer over to meet Jeff," I said to a few co-workers at Costco's home office with whom I had been discussing the latest news of the bombings. I felt that seeing Byron, who has dealt with similar injuries and works a similar job, would be a shot of hope for Jeff.

From left, Costco employees Jeff Bauman, Will Fifield and Byron Speer compare notes about life after limb loss during a recent dinner in the Boston area, where Bauman lives.

KEVIN HORST

Apparently someone else thought so too. A few days later I started getting emails and phone calls from people in Costco management. Members of Costco's top management got wind of my idea and asked if Byron and I would be interested in going to Boston to meet Jeff. A few weeks later, we were on a plane. If you've ever heard that Costco takes care of its employees, believe it.

### A magic meeting

After we landed, we met Kevin Horst and Jeff in the lobby of The Colonnade Hotel. Kevin is general manager of Costco's Nashua, New Hampshire, warehouse, where Jeff worked part-time in the deli section. While Kevin is Jeff's boss, he's so much more. Kevin's boss, Costco divisional Executive Vice President Joe Portera, asked him to take care of Jeff and his family until further notice. To Kevin this assignment is an honor. You can see it in the way he attends to Jeff's needs.

Kevin's friendly manner and Jeff's sense of humor immediately put us at ease. In minutes, our conversation turned to scars. Jeff, Byron and I each pulled up our shirts to compare trauma scars. It was a great ice-breaker. In moments, Byron, who alternates between walking on prosthetic legs and zipping around in a high-tech wheelchair, gave Jeff his thoughts on the best wheelchairs on the market and how to gain upper body strength. Seeing the two of them chat about

Every element of our trip to Boston to visit Jeff Bauman was very special. From Costco telling us they would be sending us, to the moment we landed back in Seattle, it felt like something much bigger than any single person's effort was at work to bring a group of amazing people together. When I got home, the following email from Brian Comeau, a friend of Jeff's, was waiting for me. It captures the spirit of our visit.

—WF

how to get Jeff back in action was fantastic. You could see the excitement in Jeff's face.

### Rebuilding lives

The high point of our trip came later, when we accompanied Jeff to his rehab appointment at Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital in Boston.

The brand-new facility—opened just days before the marathon bombs went off—is incredible. We watched as Jeff took tentative steps with his new prosthetic legs. I was impressed. I had a tough time learning to use my prosthesis. If he was struggling with those sorts of emotions, I didn't see it on his face. Instead, he looked determined and calm. I also admired the way his therapist challenged him, pushing him toward independence.

I quietly chatted with Brian Comeau, a friend of Jeff's who is front-office manager at The Colonnade Hotel, where Byron and I stayed. All around the facility, physical therapists worked with other amputees; several were Boston Marathon bomb survivors. We were awed at the sense of mission in the staff at Spaulding. There was an intense feel-good vibe in the room, as skilled therapists used state-of-the-art equipment and advanced techniques to rebuild lives.

### Beyond expectations

After Jeff finished his physical therapy, we went to drop off a care package that Kevin had brought from Costco. In the reception area, we ran into several other bomb survivors. It was an impromptu reunion of about eight bomb survivors, not counting mothers, fathers, significant others and extended family. We all lingered in the hallway talking for nearly two hours. The sense of camaraderie was thick, as survivors reconnected, sharing notes on their individual recoveries.

But the moment was especially poignant because, while nobody planned the meeting, it felt like God had set it up. The sense of encouragement, friendship and love in the room was powerful. Most of us were blinking back tears off and on the entire time.

Byron and I spent time talking to some parents and caregivers of bomb victims about

Will,

You have no idea how awesome it was seeing all of those survivors look at you guys as motivation. As a Bostonian, even though I was not a victim, it was a serious blow to see all of those people hurt during the marathon. The fact you guys were able to inspire them and give them hope was unbelievable.

I could see it in Jeff's face how much it meant to him to have you guys around all weekend.

I'm glad you enjoyed your time in the city and I hope we keep in touch.

Best,  
Brian Comeau

life after limb loss. "I started today off with a three-mile run through the city," I said to one parent, whose son lost a leg below the knee, as I did 23 years ago.

We also tried to answer questions about the cost of prosthetic care. "I didn't even have insurance when I lost my leg," I explained. "Prosthetic care is really expensive, but one way or another, it has always worked out for me, and I'm sure with people donating to the Boston One fund, there are financial resources to start with."

Byron also shared stories about

recent feats on dirt bikes, as well as his farming and work life. "You could almost feel the stress and fear lift," Byron said later, at lunch with Jeff and Kevin.

The best part is that Jeff, who doctors jokingly say has the healing power of Wolverine (the popular X-Men character), is getting stronger and more mobile each week. His positive attitude and determination are an inspiration to many. To me, his real strength is that he's not bitter about his loss. He's moving forward. That's strength. □

Kevin Horst, general manager of the Nashua, New Hampshire, Costco warehouse, and Jeff Bauman.



BYRON SPEER

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13TR130 8/13

Click Travel at [Costco.com](http://Costco.com) or call 1-877-849-2730.

CHRIS A RUSNAK

COOK ISLANDS TOURISM

# Spoiled by Cooks

By T. Foster Jones

IF YOU ASKED a dozen people to tell you where the Cook Islands are, you'd get a dozen different answers. No one seems to know.

The 15 Cook Islands are located in the South Pacific, about a 10-hour nonstop flight from Los Angeles. Roughly 1,000 miles from Tahiti to the east and Fiji to the west, the Cook Islands are a less expensive—but no less beautiful—destination than their neighbors.

The Cooks are replete with white-sand beaches; tranquil lagoons perfect for snorkeling, scuba diving and swimming; lush green rain forests and volcanic mountains; a slow pace and friendly people; and a wide variety of dances, festivals and other cultural events. Also on offer: excellent hiking, cycling, kite surfing, cave exploration, four-wheeling and just relaxing. Add to that a favorable exchange rate, ease of communication (they speak English) and family-run beachside accommodations with hospitality that is genuinely warm and endearing. Perhaps the Cooks have remained relatively unknown because those who have visited haven't been terribly anxious to let others in on the secret!

The islands possess a pleasantly even climate year-round, with highs averaging 77 to 84 degrees. Visas for U.S. citizens aren't required, only passports and proof of onward travel and booked accommodations.

The largest of the Cooks is Rarotonga. Ringed with coconut-palm-lined beaches, Rarotonga is lush with citrus groves, and the mountains at its center are covered in a jungle of ferns and towering trees. Waters surrounding the island teem with parrotfish, sea cucumbers and humpback whales. At 25 square miles, and with just one road, the island is easy to get around on, on foot, bike, scooter or car. You can literally walk around the entire island along the 22 miles of beach.

The capital of Rarotonga, Avarua, provides visitors with a good selection of shops, banks and cafés serving mouthwatering examples of local cuisine, such as fish in coconut sauce, stuffed breadfruit and bread pudding.



## Tablet or smartphone?

Scan or click here to watch a video showcasing the beauty of the Cook Islands. (See page 5 for scanning details.)

No visit to the Cook Islands is complete without a visit to Aitutaki, an easy plane hop from Rarotonga. Many people split their visit, combining a stay on Rarotonga with another on Aitutaki (day trips are also available).

Aitutaki's lagoon is wondrous, the water pale and clear. It is dotted with sandbars, coral ridges and 21 small islands called *motu*, many of which boast excellent beaches.

The islands' natives, the Cook Islands Maori, are famous for their sensual dancing, and Aitutaki has the reputation of putting on one of the best "island nights" dance-and-music performances on the Cooks.

Other island traditions on display throughout the year are the festivals. In fact, it is difficult to visit the islands and not see one. Cultural Festival Week, held in February, features *tivaevae* (quilt) competitions and displays of arts and crafts. Island Dance Festival Week in April has dance displays and competitions. Song Quest, a five-week contest that begins in July, brings together singers, dancers, musicians and performers from throughout the islands to Rarotonga. The big 10-day Te Maeva Nui Festival in August celebrates the islands' independence with sports, dances, music, floats and many other events. And in November, Vaka Eiva, the country's annual outrigger canoe racing festival, is held.

Before you go, it may be difficult to remember where the Cook Islands are. After you've been, you'll never forget. ☺

## The Costco Connection

Costco Travel offers packages to Rarotonga and Aitutaki. All include airfare from Los Angeles on Air New Zealand. To view packages, click "Travel" at [Costco.com](#). To book, call 1-877-849-2730.



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**AIR NEW ZEALAND**

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Hot NBA tickets,  
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# Ticket to savings

**By Tim Talevich**

IF YOU'RE LOOKING for a special holiday present this year for family or friends, consider this option from Costco: the gift of experience.

Costco features a wide variety of vouchers, tickets and gift cards for restaurants, resorts, sporting events, movies, spas, local attractions and more in the warehouses and online at [Costco.com](#)—all at great savings. A typical offer is a \$100 gift card for \$80 or less.

One hot ticket (literally) this year is for NBA (professional basketball) games in select markets. These tickets or vouchers can be purchased in the warehouses or at [Costco.com](#).

"We've lined up ticket offers for many NBA teams and will have several on board for the holiday season," says Gretchen Kim, the buyer who oversees the non-foods ticket program for Costco. "This program offers a great way to see professional basketball at a substantial savings."

Gretchen adds that the tickets are available for home games in several markets. "Fans should check their local warehouses and [Costco.com](#) to see what's available during the basketball season," she advises.

If basketball isn't your game, plenty of other options are available through Costco. Here are a few to add to your holiday gift-shopping list.

**Golf packages.** Gift cards or vouchers for rounds of golf at spectacular courses will be available in various regions.

**Restaurant gift cards.** For the person on your list who loves to eat out, consider discounts to local restaurants. The warehouses feature gift cards for local eateries, while [Costco.com](#) focuses on national chains.

**Movie tickets.** Give the gift of a night out at the movies at a price that will leave some money for popcorn.

**Health and wellness.** This category represents the ultimate in pampering. SpaFinder

gift certificates can be used for relaxing treatments, classes, resort stays and other amenities across the country. Or, consider gift cards for Nutrisystem or, for the active people on your list, a membership for 24 Hour Fitness.

"These vouchers and gift cards are a convenient and cost-effective way to find holiday gifts for your loved ones," says Gretchen. ☐

## The Costco Connection

The latest offers in this program are displayed on pallets in the warehouses and at [Costco.com](#) under "Gift Cards, Tickets & Floral." New items are added each month and the selection changes from season to season, so it's a good idea to check back frequently.

## Your child's very own book

A BOOK IS a wonderful gift for a child. Imagine if he or she were the main character in that story.

That's the idea behind *I See Me!* personalized children's books. Each book has a story that is woven around a child's name.

For example, in *My Very Own Name*, a story for a child named Theodore would have a colorful toucan delivering a "T," a hippo bringing in an "H," an eagle flying in with an "E" and so on. A special note in the beginning of the book dedicates it to the child, with a personal note on who the gift is from.

Costco is featuring vouchers for these unique books at a 30 percent savings over retail. Members can choose from seven titles to find the perfect story for a young book lover.

Ordering is easy. The voucher instructs you to visit [www.iseeme.com/Costco](http://iseeme.com/Costco) and enter the promotional code. The last day to order a book and have it arrive by Christmas is December 8.

"These make wonderful Christmas gifts for young readers—and their parents," says Gretchen Kim, who



**Tablet or smartphone?**  
Scan or click here for a video about *I See Me!* books. (See page 5 for scanning details.)

oversees the program for Costco. "The vouchers also make wonderful gifts that can be used any time of the year."

Look for vouchers for *I See Me!* books in your local Costco or at [Costco.com](#).

—TT

**Maia and Allan Haag:**  
*I See Me!*  
creators.



JEN DOWNS



# WHEN YOU'RE ALL BOTTLED UP...

We may not talk about it, but most of us have experienced it at one time or another—that uncomfortable, bloated feeling that accompanies occasional constipation. Constipation occurs for a variety of reasons, including a diet low in fiber, use of certain medications, and even stress. Kirkland Signature™ Stool Softener offers gentle, dependable relief to get you “on the move again.”

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## Payment solutions evolve with technology

TECHNOLOGY HAS revolutionized the business world, and so have the tools that keep businesses running. Methods to pay for goods and services are handier and more mobile than ever. Elavon, Costco's payment processing provider, offers simple point-of-sale solutions and affordable processing plans to fit businesses of any size.

Elavon's VirtualMerchant software allows businesses to transform any PC Web browser into a payment terminal. This secure, hosted payment solution supports both keyed and swiped transactions (with the addition of a card reader).

VirtualMerchant has been favored by online businesses, but even storefronts have found it very useful as their main payment terminal.

The VirtualMerchant app turns any mobile device into a payment terminal, allowing traveling businesses to provide their customers with a convenient and secure payment method. The app accommodates keyed and swiped transactions (with the addition of a mobile card reader, currently free for new accounts).

This option eliminates the need for an extra phone line or equipment for payment processing.



Elavon's pricing plans also have evolved. The Clear and Simple pricing plan—introduced last spring—offers Executive members a 2.49 percent flat rate for swiped-card transactions and a flat rate of 3.49 percent plus 15 cents per keyed transaction, simplifying options for business owners who prefer an alternative to a tiered-pricing plan. Members can use any type of payment terminal with this plan, and there are no limits on transaction volume.

Visit [Costco.com](#) and search "virtual merchant" for more information.—HM



PHOTODISC

# Protect your child's ID

**By Hana Medina**

THIS TIME OF year, some real scary things are going on out there, and we're not just talking about your child's Halloween costume. Fall is prime season for kids' personal information to be compromised, which can potentially lead to identity theft.

"When kids register for fall sports or after-school activities, parents submit applications that include their child's name, Social Security number [SSN] and address, and it can end up in the wrong hands," says Christine Sonnenberg, senior director of marketing at Intersections Inc., which provides Costco's Identity Guard® service. "It can also happen with unsecured medical records at the pediatrician's office, going in for an annual checkup or immunizations."

SSNs are the leading piece of information used to compromise a child's identity, according to a 2012 study conducted by Javelin Strategy & Research. The same study found that one in 40 households with children under 18 had at least one child who had experienced ID theft.

### Why kids?

Children are prime targets due to their lack of credit history. Sonnenberg says thieves assign the SSN to a different name and address, and then apply for credit cards, loans or other financial benefits. The theft can go undetected for years, and sometimes isn't discovered until the child applies for a first credit card or loan.

Some thieves also steal SSNs to commit crimes without having them become part of their own criminal record. Sonnenberg says that, due to identity theft, children have defaulted on loans, received mailed speeding tickets or were charged with crimes they didn't commit.

### Clues

Child ID theft can be hard to pinpoint, but Sonnenberg says that these events are among the warning signs that a child's identity may be compromised: The child starts receiving credit card offers;

collection agencies start calling the child; tickets or court requests start arriving in the mail.

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) website ([www.consumer.ftc.gov](http://www.consumer.ftc.gov)) says a child may also "be turned down for government benefits because [they are] being paid to another account using [the] child's Social Security number" or the child may even "get a notice from the IRS saying the child didn't pay income taxes, or that the child's Social Security number was used on another tax return."

### Prevention

Sonnenberg advises following these basic steps to protect your children:

- Don't give your children's information away, especially their SSNs. Supply only the last four digits of the SSN if possible. Ask why the information is needed and how it will be used and secured.
- Ask medical offices how they secure patient files. If they're on paper, are they locked? If they are electronic, are they encrypted?

• Teach your kids safe Internet habits, especially concerning social media. No one should post a SSN or home address online.

- The FTC site recommends checking all three credit bureaus to see if your child has an established credit history.

Identity Guard recently added kids to their identity protection plans. kID Sure® specifically monitors the Internet, chat rooms and public records for a child's information. They search for and protect against Social Security number exposure and false criminal, Department of Motor Vehicles and utilities records. kID Sure alerts parents of a potential compromise before it becomes a complicated situation. Identity Guard's Identity Theft Recovery Agents are available by phone to walk through every step of the recovery process if your child's identity is stolen.

For more information, for pricing or to sign up, visit [Costco.com](#) and search "kidsure." ☐

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# 5.0 hearing aids are your ears to the world



HEARING AID USERS know that technology today allows the hearing challenged to sport devices that are barely noticeable while offering dramatically increased functionality.

The new Kirkland Signature™ 5.0 hearing aids retain a small profile and improve sound quality and clarity, with special processing that enhances speech understanding, even in noisy environments. These new hearing aids also improve another aspect of daily living: connectivity to other devices.

The 5.0 uses a 2.4 GHz radio frequency to transmit sound, which allows for better transmission over distance as well as less echo and distortion of the signal. Also, earlier wireless

hearing aids required an intermediary device, typically worn around the neck, to communicate with wireless devices such as remote controls, clip-on microphones, TV streamers and cellphones. The 5.0 works directly with those wireless devices.

Music and hearing aids have not always worked well together, due to signal processing designed to optimize speech rather than music. A new program in the 5.0 preserves the nuances of music, providing a high-fidelity listening experience.

The 5.0 also includes features such as:

**Directionality options.** Lets you join conversations and still remain aware of surround-

ing sounds, even in a noisy environment.

**Device-to-device communication.** Allows your hearing instruments to work together as one by keeping volume levels and programs synchronized.

**Wind protection.** Premium technology lessens wind noise in the outdoors.

**Sound processing.** Delivers such a natural-sounding listening experience, you almost forget you're wearing hearing instruments.

**Automatic gain adjustment.** Individualized volume for any situation.

**Noise regulator.** Tracks and reduces disturbing sounds, even in the noisiest settings.

**Data logging.** Tracks how you use your hearing instruments for a personalized fit.

The 5.0 package includes two premium wireless hearing aids plus a remote control for changing programs and volume easily, all for \$1,899.99—\$100 less than the previous model and up to a 65 percent savings over comparable packages sold elsewhere. It's a strong addition to the quality and value offered in the industry-leading Costco Hearing Centers.—Steve Fisher

## Kirkland Signature luggage: A case study of quality

TRAVEL IS A JOY, but it can also be a challenge, particularly when it comes to lugging luggage. One major improvement for all travelers was the introduction of luggage with wheels (hello!). Then came spinning wheels, which allowed even greater maneuverability and ease of transport.

Incorporating those features, and more, is the new Kirkland Signature hybrid carry-on (Item #754073).

"This item rocks," says luggage buyer Kelly Hunt. "Our team has been working on this for years to get it just right, and we have been able to take advantage of new materials and other innovations in the luggage industry."

The hybrid nature of the piece provides it with the best features of two distinct construction styles: hard-sided and soft-sided.

"This is a true hybrid case with a configuration that you won't see out in the market," says Kelly. The hard side of the case is constructed of high-quality Bayer Makrolon polycarbonate. "Not only is this material strong enough to endure the travel of extreme road warriors, but its light weight helps bring the weight of the bag down. At 9.2 pounds, it's almost 2 pounds lighter than our previous model," Kelly notes.

The soft side of the bag is constructed of high-quality Cordura nylon. It retains the popular front-pocket feature from the previous incarnations of Kirkland Signature luggage to allow quick access to important items, and the material provides a little wiggle room when placing it in an overhead bin.

"Our case is also expandable for those times when you bring a little extra back from your travels," says Kelly.

And, in keeping with the latest developments in luggage, the Kirkland Signature carry-on has been equipped with spinner wheels. "These Hinomoto wheels glide very smoothly and provide great maneuverability," says Kelly. "No more hitting every chair as you make your way through the plane. Just spin the case sideways and glide down the aisle."

The interior dimensions—15 by 9.5 by 21 inches—remain the same. "We kept the packing capacity where it has been but made the overall case dimensions a little trimmer to



make fitting the bag into the overhead more manageable, especially with airline restrictions getting more restrictive," says Kelly.

And, while Costco's carry-on costs only \$99, Kelly says the bag's closest comparisons are cases that sell for more than \$500.

She adds, "We are very proud of how this new item turned out. This piece will make a great addition to our luggage lineup."

—T. Foster Jones

# NEW

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# Cocoa channels

**Sustaining sources, and the people who provide them, is one of Costco's goals**

PHOTOGRAPHY: JOHN LEE



## BuyingSmart

Sherrie Newman fills October's consumer reporter slot with this behind-the-scenes look at a Costco program. Send your questions about this article to:

[buyingsmart@costco.com](mailto:buyingsmart@costco.com).

**ABOVE:** An example of drying practices that yield the high-quality cocoa beans for Costco's program. The beans are off the ground, under tarps supplied by the Costco/Bloomer partnership, in a structure built by the village co-op.

**By Sherrie Newman**

I LOVE TO indulge in a bit of rich chocolate at the end of the day, and knowing that a number of experts have said dark chocolate is good for your health makes it extra sweet. My favorite treats come from Costco (for a sampling, see "Chocolate designed the Costco way" on the next page) and I've often wondered where they get their chocolate, so I did a little digging and uncovered a wonderful story.

For some food supplies in the world, there is concern about the global demands put on available resources, and what that is doing to the environment, the farmers who live off the land, and the long-term supply of product for consumers. When Costco began working with their Kirkland Signature™ chocolate supplier, U.S.-based Bloomer Chocolate Company, they discovered that the cocoa industry is constantly looking at how to provide a sustainable supply of quality cocoa. As Costco strives to be responsible in its sourcing of food products, they decided to develop a partnership with the farming communities, Bloomer and an international supply-chain organization to develop a comprehensive sustainability program and make a difference.

Tess Wilkins, general merchandise manager and assistant vice president of candy and snacks at Costco, explains, "As we reviewed various commodities that Costco sells, it became very apparent to us in some areas that if we didn't do something, key

**RIGHT:** Cocoa pods nearly ready to harvest. Pods develop directly off the trunks.



sources could disappear. We wanted to participate in global responsible sourcing both to meet the increasing expectations of members and to support the availability of quality products going forward."

The world's largest producer of cocoa beans is West Africa's Ivory Coast, where thousands of farms grow cocoa trees and harvest the beans for sale. The beans destined for Costco's various chocolate products are grown in a wide river valley in the beautiful southwest region of the country. The partners developed the program with 15 cocoa-bean farming cooperatives, consisting of more than 5,000 farmers, based on the premise that "everyone involved in the cocoa supply chain will benefit through fair pricing, better quality and traceability of product, and a long-term future for the industry," Tess says.



**BELOW:** Children excitedly watch the village farmers earn awards for their quality bean production. These children also benefit from a new school built from program funding.



### High quality

According to Sheri Flies, assistant general merchandising manager of global sourcing at Costco, "The program provides extensive farmer training in water management, fertilizer application and harvesting practices that will improve crop yields and benefit the environment." Increasing the quality of the cocoa trees is also important. Sheri says, "The program provides farmers with stock seedlings which are high yield and resilient, and helps regenerate aging farms." To date, more than 187,000 high-yielding seedlings have been distributed.

As the quality of the cocoa harvest improves, it becomes more sustainable and able to support industry needs. Sheri explains, "We manage the entire process from bean to jars of treats. Farmers are paid fair prices and benefit from social enhancements; we maintain good supply sources and can give back to our members in terms of quality and great prices."

### Traceability

Another important aspect of Costco's cocoa program is traceability, which means Costco chocolate can be directly linked back to its origins. Tess explains, "Food safety is very important, and we must ensure we get exactly what we purchased with no alteration of quality."

The program has a detailed process that tracks the complete chain of custody of chocolate bound for Costco. Kip Walk, Blommers corporate director of sustainability, says, "Costco members can be assured that the integrity of the product is securely maintained until they purchase it in the warehouse." He adds, "The program is a

CONTINUED ON PAGE 90

# Chocolate designed the Costco way

THAT SWEET BITE of bliss begins when farmers harvest the cocoa beans, which are shipped directly to the chocolate manufacturer in jute bags marked "COSTCO." Kip Walk, Blommers corporate director of sustainability, explains, "We roast the beans and convert them into chocolate through a multi-step process of grinding and refining into a rich cocoa paste [known as cocoa mass], then blending and mixing [a process called "conching"] with pure cocoa butter and sugar to make finely conched and tempered chocolate." The results are creamy, satiny, smooth and delicious.

The chocolate is then shipped to Costco's candy suppliers, who blend in various ingredients called inclusions, such as nuts, fruit or unique flavorings, and mold the mixtures into a variety of shapes to create delectable little confections for our enjoyment.

Franck Myhre, assistant buyer for corporate foods, is Costco's chocolatier. "All Kirkland Signature chocolate produced in North America is sourced directly from the farms participating in the program," he says, "and our European chocolates are made from

sustainably sourced cocoa beans as well."

Franck designs all Kirkland Signature chocolates and makes sure they are the best possible. "I'm specific about the quality of ingredients, ratio of chocolate to inclusions, and the look and taste," he says. Working with the candy suppliers, he creates recipes, deciding whether to use dark or light chocolate and which inclusions to add, such as almonds or dried cherries; he even decides the amount of chocolate versus number of nuts and whether the candy should look polished or not.

Costco maintains stringent quality requirements, he notes: "We make our chocolate with pure cocoa butter, not cheaper fats, which makes it richer and finer. We are also very particular about defects; for instance we can't have too many chocolates sticking together, or broken and chipped, and provide exact specifications to the vendors. When they launch the first product, we do multiple taste tests to ensure expectations are being met."

He continues, "When making Kirkland Signature

chocolates, we determine the best-quality product we can make and the most ethical way of buying product components. Ultimately we leverage our volume purchasing power and work on pricing with the manufacturers and suppliers so it provides our members with the best value possible. "Our members love chocolate and have high expectations, and our chocolates are sold in every Costco around the world so we have to be globally acceptable with every piece we make."

Look for the description on Kirkland Signature chocolates that tells the Costco cocoa story and how important it is to a sustainable supply of Costco chocolate. Two of my favorite items are the new Dark Chocolate Super Fruits (coming in October) and the premium Belgian Chocolate Gift Box (in November). Keep an eye out for seasonal specialty items such as the luscious Kirkland Signature Chocolate Truffles, which are 70 percent pure chocolate and dusted with cocoa powder, all sourced from the farming program. I'll definitely be stocking up on those little goodies over the holidays.—SN

ASHLEY GENEVIEVE



PHOTOGRAPHY: JOHN LEE



**FAR LEFT:** The inauguration of a school built with funds earned by the co-op. In attendance are local government officials, as well as representatives from Costco and Blommer.

**INSET:** An example of traceability, showing that these quality beans are marked for Costco as far back in the supply chain as the village where they are collected.

## Costco chocolate facts

**CONTENT PERCENTAGE.** Single origin. These are mentioned frequently when discussing chocolate, but what do these numbers and terms mean?

The content percentage listed represents the ratio of cocoa mass and cocoa butter to sugar and any other ingredients. The higher the percentage, the more chocolate in the mix. It takes 2.2 pounds of fresh cocoa beans to create enough cocoa mass and cocoa butter to make 1 pound of 70 percent chocolate.

Single-origin chocolate uses cocoa beans from a single source, sometimes a single estate. In its seasonal assortment box, Kirkland Signature chocolate offers three single-origin foil-wrapped tasting squares sourced from Venezuela, Ivory Coast and Papua New Guinea. These countries represent the three main worldwide chocolate sources—South America, Africa and Indonesia, respectively—and Costco provides these options so members can taste the different flavors; the chocolate content in each ranges from 50 to 72 percent.

Costco's goal is to use chocolate sourced from the farming program in all Kirkland Signature chocolate products. It is currently used in Kirkland Signature Milk Chocolate Almonds, Milk Chocolate Covered Raisins and Milk Chocolate Macadamia Caramel Clusters, as well as Kirkland Signature Chocolate Chips. Costco bakeries also use the chips, along with chocolate chunks from the program, in their cookies, muffins and Kirkland Signature Chewy Granola Bars.—SN

### CHOCOLATE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 89

unique and successful model for how things can be done the right way to support the health of the cocoa industry and the farming communities that depend on it."

### Fair return to everyone

Farmers in the program are paid the best prices based on the world market and the quality of the product. "Costco's agreements with the farmers are transparent," Tess says, "We have accountability processes that track revenue to make sure it goes directly to them."

The program also provides education so farmers can learn to sell their products, and cooperatives are trained in management and distribution methods. Annual audits are conducted to ensure goals are being met, and each year an independent third party also audits to guarantee finances are being managed appropriately.

"Ensuring a fair return is more than just the price paid; it's also important to be certain beans are obtained from a source that is socially and environmentally responsible. We require that the farmers' working conditions are fair, and we empower women through education while requiring they be part of the decision-making process in their communities," Sheri notes. "Costco's responsible sourcing practices are evolving, and we are striving to embed the concepts into all of our buying practices."

### Social impact

One of the most heartwarming components of the program is its social impact on the farmers and their families. I was pleased to discover that, above and beyond the payments for cocoa, Costco makes annual donations earmarked for local projects. Sheri says, "Each year the cooperatives decide on a beneficial

project to build, and learn how to enhance their communities as their businesses flourish."

One village wanted a maternity ward, as they had no medical facilities and no vehicles to travel to the nearest clinic. A husband described carrying his wife 12 miles in the dark of night while she was in labor, just to get her to a midwife to deliver their baby. Early this year, construction of a new facility was completed, including midwife housing.

The local ministry of health hired a midwife for the site (40 healthy babies have already been delivered), and the maternity ward provides access to pre and postnatal care to 4,500 women in seven communities. The facility is also used for other purposes; 11,000 polio vaccines have been administered to local children there.

So far more than \$200,000 in funding from Costco has helped build seven projects, ranging from secure storage facilities and a community center to schools, healthcare facilities and a maternity ward. More than 20,000 people in the area now have access to vital services, and six more projects are scheduled to start this fall.

Tess sums it up, "We are disciplined in how we manage the sourcing program. Our suppliers have on-ground expertise and a direct relationship with the farming communities, and our system is short without middlemen. Therefore we can afford to pay farmers fair prices and support community improvements, while still offering great value and quality to our members. It's a healthy way to do business." ■

---

*Sherrie Newman (sn.firstpoint@gmail.com) is a marketing and communications consultant who lives in the Seattle area with her family.*

**KIRKLAND**  
*Signature*

*go ahead,*  
**EAT 2 PER DAY**



Kirkland Signature Sugar-Free Calcium Chews are a delicious way to support the health of your bones, teeth, and muscles.<sup>†</sup> Each sugar-free chew features 500 mg of calcium plus vitamin D and vitamin K — and they taste great!

- Supports strong bones and teeth<sup>†</sup>
- Supports muscle health<sup>†</sup>
- Adequate calcium throughout life, as part of a well-balanced diet, may reduce the risk of osteoporosis later in life.

† These statements have not been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration. These products are not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease.

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# WORK HARD, PLAY HARD, WITHOUT THE PAIN.

Thanks to our Kirkland Signature Ibuprofen

Softgels, you can stay on course.

Our ibuprofen softgels are  
tough on pain and act fast to deliver  
relief where and when you need it.

Choose Kirkland Signature, of course!

*A Dose of Quality  
and Value!*

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Item #196911



## Video conversion scores big with soccer champ



Brandi Chastain on the field with FC Gold Pride in 2009 (left), and some of her recovered memories.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF BRANDI CHASTAIN

# Winning memories

**By David Wight**

WHEN THE CONNECTION learned that Costco member Brandi Chastain was impressed with a 1-Hour Photo service, we were eager to track her down for the story. You should recognize the name, and may recall her iconic image—on the covers of *Sports Illustrated*, *Newsweek* and *Time* magazines—celebrating the penalty kick with which she took her team to a World Cup win in 1999.

We caught up with the Olympic and World Cup champ, author, mom, youth coach, ESPN color commentator and not-for-profit co-founder (Bay Area Women's Sports Initiative) by phone at her California home.

### **The Costco Connection:** What got you interested in transferring old media to DVD?

**Brandi Chastain:** I was going to take a trip to Brazil for the U.S. State Department and U.S. Soccer, a goodwill ambassador trip trying to get local government officials and people to recognize how important it would be for young girls to participate. I thought it would be great to bring some video of my teammates and me playing. If I could get that on a disc, great, because I don't have a VHS [player]—I don't think most people have those anymore. I found tapes from when we played Brazil, and took those to Costco because I knew they did transfers to disc. I asked if I could get the transfer back in five days—I'm always doing stuff at the last minute—but they told me the process takes about three weeks.

### **CC:** But you didn't take "three weeks" as the final word, right?

**BC:** I learned that the headquarters of Yes Video, the company that provides the service, was close to my home, so I drove by to see if that would be any faster. Unfortunately, they couldn't do it, and after seeing the process, I understand why. I am in awe of how

incredibly secure and safe everything is, and how delicately they [treat] every single piece of media.

### **CC:** What type of videos did you convert?

**BC:** The USA–Brazil soccer stuff, but I also had all this other stuff, from when I was 3 or 4 years old with my brother in the bathtub, to youth soccer, to Olympic soccer. As it turns out, we were having this family reunion, so I got to show my grandmother some old things of my father and my mom and cousins together—just some really funny things.

### **CC:** Will you be doing more transfers?

**BC:** I have a ton more. That was just the tip of the iceberg. I have Hi8 tapes of our first-ever professional women's soccer league in the U.S., and other national league stuff—on the road or behind-the-scenes kind of stuff.

### **CC:** You retired from professional soccer in 2010. How are you spending your time now?

**BC:** I don't like that word [retire]; it seems so final. I'd rather say I'm on a sabbatical [laughs]. Mom is the No. 1 [priority]. My son is 7 years old, about to go into second grade, so our summer vacation has been about him, and about coaching soccer. It was actually the first summer I remember that I didn't play soccer.

### **CC:** In conclusion, what do you want to share with Costco members about your overall experience?

**BC:** Both of my parents passed away fairly young, so photos and videos got lost in the shuffle. That's a reason why this is such a gift: I'm re-collecting these things for myself. If you haven't tried it, feel comfortable in knowing your memories will be safe and secure, and that you'll have access to them on a regular basis. ☺



## The Costco Connection

Convert your fading home movies, videos or slides to long-life gold DVDs. It's a good time to plan holiday gifts of converted memories. Typical delivery time is three weeks, and pricing starts as low as \$17.99. Costco members receive free online storage with easy access for sharing media memories with family and friends, even on smartphones and tablets. Information is available at 1-Hour Photo counters in most warehouses, by phone toll-free at 1-866-463-7694 or search "home movies" at [Costco.com](http://Costco.com).



**A. Philips 5' LED-Lighted Tinsel Tree**

With 280 LED lights, this holiday tinsel tree combines steady illumination and twinkling bulbs. Indoor/outdoor compatible. Assembly required. Item #751942. **Warehouse only.**

**B. GE Christmas Tree Pre-Lit with Color Choice LED Lights**

Accented with Just Cut® branch tips to give the tree a natural look and feel, and Easy Shape Technology® for easy set-up and decoration. Use the control box to change and alternate between warm white and multi-color LED lights. Available in three sizes: Item #732910—7.5', 700 lights.

Item #832910—9', 900 lights.

Item #932910—12', 1,200 lights.

**Warehouse and Costco.com.**

**C. 14-Karat White Gold Opal and Diamond Pendant**

Featuring an oval-cut opal surrounded by 31 round-cut brilliant diamonds, this 14-karat white gold pendant comes with a 17" chain. Item #674333.

**Warehouse and Costco.com.**

**D. Nerf Rebelle Guardian Crossbow**

Take aim with the Nerf Rebelle Guardian Crossbow. With the auto-rotating launcher that holds all six collectible darts, you can fire the darts one at a time or blast all six in a rapid stream up to 75 feet away. Item #981031. **Warehouse only.**



# What's new

EXCITING NEW PRODUCTS  
ARRIVING SOON AT COSTCO

**Lighted Snowman with Rotating Train Scenes**

This detailed decorative piece plays nine classic holiday songs, including "Jingle Bells," "Silent Night" and "Deck the Halls." Features volume-control dial and adapter. Item #749721.

**Warehouse only.**



**D**



**E**

## FOCUS ON:

# Taste the difference

**TASTE IS WHAT** makes the difference. Kirkland Signature™ Roasted Corn Chowder with Poblano and Chipotle Peppers is filled with the fresh taste of the summer's sweet corn. The corn is grilled to heighten its flavor, then simmered with peppers and soft, thick potatoes to create a zesty, flavorful soup.

This item's packaging is made possible by a new technology in the soup industry. "Instead of cans we are now able to use cartons," says assistant buyer Troy Kozen. "These allow us to get more units in a truck and fewer trucks on the road."

The soup represents a 30 percent better value than the closest competition and is gluten-free. Item #770729. **Warehouse only.**



### E. Canon EOS 70D DSLR 2-Lens Bundle

The 70D features innovative Dual Pixel CMOS AF technology that enables you to shoot video in Live View with smooth, fast and accurate autofocus. Live View also provides fast and accurate autofocus for capturing still images. Includes 18-55 mm STM lens, 55-250 mm lens, 3" various-angle LCD, built-in Wi-Fi, 32 GB card and case. Item #793387. **Warehouse and Costco.com.**

**F. School Bus 2-in-1 Play Center** This cleverly designed play set features a honking horn, fold-out stop sign, removable play top and a side door that pulls out to become a chair. Includes 11 play pieces. Item #981121. **Warehouse and Costco.com.**

**G. Circulon 18" x 15" Roaster with Rack** Made of carbon steel, this roaster features a nonstick interior for easy cleaning, large cast-aluminum handles and a removable rack system with flip-up handles. Oven safe to 500 F and holds up to a 24-pound turkey. Item #383322. **Warehouse and Costco.com.**

**H. 3-Piece Baby Set** Luxurious and soft, this set includes a snuggly oversize baby blanket (30" x 45"), cozy security blanket (12" x 12") and adorable plush animal. Item #207980. **Warehouse only.**



# Play like you mean it!



Give your joints the support of  
Kirkland Signature Glucosamine  
with MSM and spend the day  
doing things you love.\*

- Supports cartilage\*
- Cushions joints\*
- Helps promote comfortable joint movement\*
- Promotes flexibility and range of motion\*
- Provides a natural source of sulfur, a vital mineral for the formation of collagen, connective tissue and healthy joint cartilage\*
- Supports joint comfort\*



\*These statements have not been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration. This product is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease.



Visit our full-service pharmacy  
for all of your prescription,  
health and wellness needs.

12-CC-1023sjS



USP has tested and verified select Kirkland Signature supplements for their ingredients, potency and manufacturing process. USP sets official standards for dietary supplements. See [www.usp.org](http://www.usp.org).

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[WAREHOUSE/COSTCO.COM](http://WAREHOUSE/COSTCO.COM) | AVAILABLE NOW  
Item #249375

# Eat Freely!



Don't let heartburn get you down. Kirkland Signature Lansoprazole offers relief from heartburn for 24 hours – with just one pill per day for 14 days.

Freedom never tasted so good!

*A Dose of Quality and Value!*

**Exclusively from Costco Wholesale**  
**WAREHOUSE ONLY | AVAILABLE NOW**  
Item #650402



# inside **costco** special events

New and exciting products available at warehouses for a limited time only

## featured events

Look for (A) Kontakt women's and men's apparel, (B) Sebamed skin care, (C) Jennifer Adams bedding and (D) Masterclad cookware in warehouses during October. For an updated list of participating warehouses, go to Costco.com and search "kontakt44," "sebamed44," "Jennifer Adams" and "masterclad44."

For previously featured events, search "allacrossafrica," "collegiateapparel44," "dowdle44," "goalzero44," "jewelrytoyourdoorstep44," "marcella44," "massagechairs44," "onesole44," "romadesigns44," "scarves44," "smartsilk44," "traegergrills" and "vitamix6300."



[Click here for a list of special events by region.](#)

## ALASKA

### Anchorage

Oct 19 Lung Health Clinic

### Anchorage II

Oct 10-20 Miracle door mats

### Juneau

Oct 29-Nov 10 Miracle door mats

## IDAH0

### Boise

Oct 11-20 Collegiate accessories  
Oct 18-27 SmartSilk silk bedding

### Coeur d'Alene

Oct 25-Nov 3 Jennifer Adams apparel

### Nampa

Oct 25-Nov 3 Collegiate accessories

### Pocatello

Oct 25-Nov 3 Miracle door mats

### Twin Falls

Oct 25-Nov 3 Miracle door mats

## MONTANA

### Billings

Oct 4-13 Professional cookware  
Oct 26 Lung Health Clinic

### Bozeman

Oct 4-13 Miracle door mats  
Oct 11-20 Professional cookware

### Helena

Oct 18-27 SmartSilk silk bedding

### Kalispell

Oct 25-Nov 3 SmartSilk silk bedding

### Missoula

Oct 25-Nov 3 Professional cookware

## OREGON

### Albany

Oct 4-13 Traeger pellet grills  
Oct 11-20 Collegiate accessories  
Oct 19 Lung Health Clinic  
Oct 25-Nov 3 Miracle door mats

### Aloha

Oct 4-13 Miracle door mats

### Bend

Oct 26 Lung Health Clinic

### Clackamas

Oct 11-20 Collegiate accessories  
Oct 18-27 Miracle door mats

### Eugene

Oct 12 Lung Health Clinic  
Oct 18-27 Miracle door mats

### Hillsboro

Oct 12 Lung Health Clinic  
Oct 18-27 Professional cookware

## Medford

Oct 18-27 Jennifer Adams apparel

## Portland

Oct 11-20 Collegiate accessories

## Roseburg

Oct 4-13 SmartSilk silk bedding

## Salem

Oct 12 Lung Health Clinic  
Oct 18-27 Jennifer Adams apparel  
Oct 25-Nov 3 Collegiate accessories

## Tigard

Oct 11-20 Sebamed skin care

Oct 11-20 Sheds

Oct 18-27 Traeger pellet grills

## Warrenton

Oct 4-13 Miracle door mats

## Wilsonville

Oct 4-13 Miracle door mats

Oct 25-Nov 3 Collegiate accessories

Oct 26 Lung Health Clinic

## UTAH

### Lehi

Oct 4-13 Professional cookware

### Murray

Oct 11-20 Collegiate accessories

### Ogden

Oct 25-Nov 3 Traeger pellet grills

### Orem

Oct 19 Lung Health Clinic

Oct 11-20 Collegiate accessories

Oct 19 Lung Health Clinic

### Sandy

Oct 25-Nov 3 Collegiate accessories

### Spanish Fork

Oct 18-27 Miracle door mats

### West Bountiful

Oct 25-Nov 3 Collegiate accessories

Oct 26 Lung Health Clinic

### West Valley

Oct 11-20 Sheds

## WASHINGTON

### Bellingham

Oct 26 Lung Health Clinic

### Burlington

Oct 25-Nov 3 Collegiate accessories

Oct 25-Nov 3 Polish pottery

### Clarkston

Oct 11-20 Miracle door mats

Oct 26 Lung Health Clinic

### Covington

Oct 11-20 Artune jewelry

### East Wenatchee

Oct 11-20 Miracle door mats

### Everett

Oct 11-20 Sheds

## Federal Way

Oct 11-20 Polish pottery

Oct 12 Lung Health Clinic

## Gig Harbor

Oct 25-Nov 3 Miracle door mats

## Issaquah

Oct 25-Nov 3 Traeger pellet grills

## Kennewick

Oct 12 Lung Health Clinic

## Kirkland

Oct 12 Lung Health Clinic

## Marysville

Oct 25-Nov 3 Sheds

## Puyallup

Oct 4-13 Miracle door mats

Oct 11-20 Collegiate accessories

## Sequim

Oct 4-13 Professional cookware

## Silverdale

Oct 18-27 SmartSilk silk bedding

## Spokane

Oct 18-27 Collegiate accessories

## N Spokane

Oct 11-20 Collegiate accessories

Oct 25-Nov 3 Miracle door mats

## Tacoma

Oct 11-20 Polish pottery

Oct 26 Lung Health Clinic

## Tukwila

Oct 4-13 Jennifer Adams apparel

## Tumwater

Oct 18-27 Miracle door mats

Oct 19 Lung Health Clinic

## Union Gap

Oct 11-20 Miracle door mats

Oct 18-27 SmartSilk silk bedding

## Vancouver

Oct 11-20 Miracle door mats

## E Vancouver

Oct 11-20 Collegiate accessories

## Woodinville

Oct 4-13 SmartSilk silk bedding

## specialty Services

at your local warehouse or business center

### ALASKA

Anchorage

•

Anchorage II

•

Juneau

•

### IDAHO

Boise

•

Coeur d'Alene

•

Nampa

•

Pocatello

•

Twin Falls

•

### MONTANA

Billings

•

Bozeman

•

Helena

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Kalispell

•

Missoula

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### OREGON

Albany

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Aloha

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Bend

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Clackamas

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Eugene

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Hillsboro

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Medford

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Portland

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Roseburg

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Salem

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Tigard

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Warrenton

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Wilsonville

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### UTAH (NORTHWEST REGION)

Lehi

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Murray

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Ogden

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Orem

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St. George

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Salt Lake City

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Sandy

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Spanish Fork

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West Bountiful

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West Valley

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### WASHINGTON

Aurora Village

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Bellingham

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Burlington

•

Clarkston

•

Covington

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East Wenatchee

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Fife

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Gig Harbor

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Issaquah

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Kirkland

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Lacey

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Lynnwood Business Ctr.

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Marysville

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Puyallup

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Seattle

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Sequim

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Silverdale

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Spokane

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N Spokane

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Tacoma

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Tukwila

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Tumwater

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Union Gap

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Vancouver

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E Vancouver

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Woodinville

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### Services at all locations (except Fife and Lynnwood Business Centers)

ATM, Bakery, Deli/Produce, Executive Membership, Food Court or Hot Dog Cart, Fresh Meat, Pharmacy, Special Order Kiosk and Tire Service Center

Costco Travel.\* 1-877-849-2730

Costco Services. A suite of discount business and consumer services.\* 1-800-280-6000

\*Also available at Costco.com

# COSTCO SERVICES

# Update

To learn more about our complete suite of Costco services, click on the "Services" link at [Costco.com](http://Costco.com) or call toll-free 1-800-220-6000.

## GREAT DEALS ON COSTCO SERVICES



## Sign up and save

THE SUPERB VALUES you usually find with Costco Services are even better this month with the following special offers.

**Elavon Payment Processing.** Get a \$100 Costco Cash card plus low rates when you open a new account with Elavon (current Elavon customers are not eligible). The Costco Cash card will be mailed six to eight weeks after account approval. Offer is valid from October 3 to 27, 2013. Call 1-800-848-6705 and refer to promotional code 83110.

**First Choice Loan Service Inc.** First Choice helps with mortgage purchase and refinancing. Lender fees for Executive members are capped at \$500 (normally \$600) and fees for Gold Star and Business members, normally \$750, are capped at \$650. Loan applications initiated and submitted between October 3 and 27, 2013 are eligible for the reduced lender fee promotion. Terms and conditions apply. Visit [Costco.com](http://Costco.com) and search "Home Loans SB" for more information.

**Identity Guard® Total Protection®.** Purchase one month of Identity Guard Total Protection and receive the next two months at no additional charge. If you do not call to cancel your

membership with Identity Guard within the 90-day introductory period, you will be billed \$9.99 (for Executive members) or \$13.49 per month (for Gold Star and Business members) until you call to cancel. Visit [Costco.com](http://Costco.com) and search "ID Protect SB."

**ShareBuilder.** Executive members who open a new ShareBuilder account are eligible to receive a \$125 account bonus to start online investing. Open a new online investing account by October 31, 2013, and fund the account with at least \$5,000 by November 1, 2013, to qualify. The account bonus is limited to one per unique customer or custodial beneficiary. This offer is available to Executive members only and excludes IRAs and ESAs (Education Savings Accounts). To learn more, visit [Costco.com](http://Costco.com) and search "Online Investing SB."

**Personal and business checks.** Executive members receive 25 percent (normally 20 percent) off all check products. Gold Star and Business members receive 10 percent off. Visit [Costco.com](http://Costco.com) and search "Checks SB." Use promo code "Promo 4E" for Executive members; "Promo 4R" for Gold Star and Business members.

**Don't forget to use your Reward on your next trip to Costco.**



Some restrictions apply. See "Services" at [Costco.com](http://Costco.com) for applicable terms and conditions. All services are provided by third parties, may not be available in all areas and are subject to change without notice.

WATER, WATER EVERYWHERE

## Quick action can save your home

THE ELEMENTS OF wind, fire and water can be used to create, but they can also destroy, as evidenced by natural disasters across the country. Hurricane season is here, and the one-year anniversary of Superstorm Sandy—the second-costliest hurricane in United States history—is approaching.

While not everyone in the country has to worry about hurricanes and the water damage they can cause, homeowners should know that even a minor water-related incident can cause extensive damage if it is not handled properly. Prompt action is the best way to repair water damage and prevent more damage in the future. Wood flooring can take days to show damage from water, but if you don't work quickly to stop the water from spreading and dry the affected areas, it may be too late.

The key to minimizing water damage is to contact your insurance provider immediately, so they can assess the loss and work with trained water-remediation specialists to dry and clean your home.

Ameriprise Auto & Home Insurance works with their Costco policyholders to have licensed professionals at homes quickly, often within four hours of a water loss being reported. For more information and to get a free no-obligation quote from Costco's exclusive auto and home insurance provider, please call 1-888-404-5365 or go to [Costco.com](http://Costco.com) and search "Protect."

## TO YOUR HEALTH

## Introducing Costco Health Insurance Marketplace

COSTCO IS LEADING the way to guide and educate members on available options in the new world of healthcare reform, while delivering high-quality services. The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act has caused material changes in the healthcare plans Costco members can access and use. In California, Costco has partnered with carrier and industry leaders to offer members customized insurance solutions. In addition, Costco has launched new resources to support members all year long, including the Costco Health Reform Information Center and its dedicated member-advocacy team. To learn more, visit [www.costcoquote.com](http://www.costcoquote.com).

Costco also offers individual plans through Aetna to Costco members in 10 other states: Arizona, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Michigan, Nevada, Pennsylvania, Texas and Virginia. To learn more about plans available in these areas, call 1-866-286-3155.

# Family tree

WHO DO YOU think you are? New Jersey Costco member Megan Smolenyak<sup>2</sup> ([www.honoringourancestors.com](http://www.honoringourancestors.com)) can help you find out. More on that name later.

One of the nation's foremost genealogists—she calls herself a genealogical explorer—Smolenyak<sup>2</sup> has researched the family histories of President and Mrs. Obama and numerous celebrities, most notably on the popular television show *Who Do You Think You Are?* She has written six books, does speaking engagements and is a cold-case researcher for the Army, the Naval Criminal Investigative Service (NCIS) and the FBI.

"It was a sixth-grade homework assignment," she says, explaining how she got started. "We had to go home and find out what country our surname was from."

Her initial interest in genealogy came in the pre-Internet years, requiring a lot of work via snail mail and on-site research. She was living in Washington, D.C., as a teenager and couldn't wait to turn 16. "Not to get my driver's license," she says, "but because that was how old you had to be to get into the National Archives."

Although the Internet has helped, Smolenyak<sup>2</sup> says most vital records are not online. Some agencies have online ordering systems, but you're still dealing with a human being, she explains. "There are places in California that take over a year to fulfill requests."

Another challenge is privacy laws. "When you make your request, you have to submit a chain of documents to prove your connection," she says. "Even the stuff I do for the Army, acting on the federal government's behalf, I'm not above faxing the governor of a state if I'm really determined to get a case solved."

For those who want to research their own family backgrounds, she advises, "Start at home. Do a scavenger hunt at your home or a parent's home. Look in drawers, the attic; look in the basement. Look for old photos with names on the back, look for diplomas, military discharge papers. And pick up the phone and call any relatives



President Obama poses with Megan Smolenyak<sup>2</sup> in Moneygall, Ireland, a village to which she traced some of Obama's ancestors.

PETE SOUZA

you've got who are even 20 minutes older than you."

Now, about her name. Smolenyak is her real maiden name, but it's also her husband's name. "I don't know what's weirder," she laughs. "That I managed to find another Smolenyak to marry or that I managed to find one that wasn't related to me."

—Steve Fisher



#### Tablet or smartphone?

Scan or click here for a video about Megan Smolenyak<sup>2</sup>'s genealogical work. (See page 5 for scanning details.)

## We want to hear from you!

If you have a note, photo or story to share about Costco or Costco members, email it to [connection@costco.com](mailto:connection@costco.com) with "The Member Connection" in the subject line or send it to The Member Connection, *The Costco Connection*, P.O. Box 34088, Seattle, WA 98124-1088. Submissions cannot be acknowledged or returned.

**WHEN COSTCO MEMBER** Susan Weese took a medical illustration course at the Art Institute of Chicago, she didn't expect to start a long-term love affair.

"I have been in love with skeletons for 40 years," she says. "The bones are so beautiful and so intricate; I think they're just gorgeous."

Last year, Weese embarked on a yearlong project. At her request, her husband bought her an articulated skeleton that she could pose. She vowed "to take a picture of it every day, and post it on my blog [<http://theknifewife.blogspot.com>], for a year." She began on November 1, 2012, and has traveled the world with "Samantha." And the "family" has grown as Weese has acquired more skeletons.

As for people's reactions, she says, "They either love her or hate her." She adds, "They threw her out of the Colosseum in Rome. They wouldn't even let her on the boat to go to the Statue of Liberty. Here's how you know a real New Yorker: Walk across the Brooklyn Bridge with a skeleton. The tourists all stopped us. New Yorkers didn't even look." —SF



# Posing bones

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